

THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD



THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION
INSTITUTE OF CULTURE
CALCUTTA

1938

**Published by
Swami Lokeswarananda
Secretary
The Ramakrishna Mission
Institute of Culture
Gol Park, Calcutta 700 029**

**The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture
Calcutta India**

First Published : 1938

**Printed by Photo-Offset at .
Swapna Printing Works Pvt. Ltd.
52 Raja Rammohan Sarani
Calcutta 700 009**

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The first birth centenary of Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886) was marked by a Parliament of Religions held in Calcutta in March 1937. Among those who presided over its various sessions lasting for eight days were Swami Abhedananda (one of Sri Ramakrishna's direct disciples), Rabindranath Tagore, Sir Francis Younghusband (whose plane, incidentally, was piloted by Charles Lindberg) and Dr Brajendra Nath Seal. There was hardly a country which did not send its representative to this Parliament. Many savants personally came to pay their homage to this humble man of nineteenth-century India and those who could not come sent their tributes. Some learned papers were read at this parliament, some impromptu but learned speeches were also made, one of them being by Sarojini Naidu. The proceedings together represented the religious thinking of the best minds of the epoch, as also their love and respect for this unlettered god-man whose religious perceptions baffled and still baffle mankind.

A book, entitled *Religions of the World*, was published, in two volumes, with the proceedings of this Parliament of Religions in 1938 by the Institute. The book has been reprinted twice since and a third reprint is being published now in one volume instead of two. Readers will perhaps prefer this, for they can now have the entire proceedings in the same volume.

The last few decades have been a tumultuous period with drastic changes, both physical and moral. In spite of, or perhaps because of, these changes, Sri Ramakrishna is now better known and better loved than at the time this book first appeared. Somehow or other, many now see in his wisdom man's only hope of survival against the threat of a possible nuclear war. Hopefully, for this very reason, if not also for others, this book will commend itself to every serious minded person.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

I

This is the last but not the least important publication in connection with the Sri Ramakrishna Birth-Centenary Celebrations (1936-1937). It is a pleasure and a privilege to us to be able to bring together in the form of a book the papers and speeches on the world's religions in multifarious aspects, read or delivered by persons of light and leading, hailing from different countries of East and West. The diversity of the subjects and the variety of presentation that characterize this symposium form a fitting tribute to the sacred memory of one who was himself a living Parliament of Religions, no less than to the glorious ideal of world symphony in which many notes commingle and which is a need of humanity today.

II

This book comprising not less than 1100 pages is issued in two volumes. As a rule the papers and speeches have been published in full, as announced by the organizers of the Parliament at its last session. It was not found possible to send the proofs to all the writers and speakers, many of whom are living in distant countries.

Diacritical marks have been used, wherever necessary, in the English transliterations of words in Sanskrit and other Indian languages. Italics have not been used in the paragraphs which are entirely in one Continental language or another. A note on the pronunciation of transliterated words has been furnished at the beginning of each volume, with examples from the book itself.

For facility of reference, an Index has been added at the end of each volume.

NOTE ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF TRANSLITERATED
WORDS IN SANSKRIT AND OTHER INDIAN
LANGUAGES

a	stands for	अ,	and sounds like	<i>o</i> in <i>come</i> .
ā	„ „	आ	„ „ „	<i>a</i> in <i>far</i> .
i	„ „	इ	„ „ „	<i>i</i> in <i>kin</i> .
ī	„ „	ई	„ „ „	<i>ee</i> in <i>feel</i> .
u	„ „	उ	„ „ „	<i>u</i> in <i>full</i> .
ū	„ „	ऊ	„ „ „	<i>oo</i> in <i>cool</i> .
ri	„ „	ऋ	may be pronounced like <i>ri</i> .	
e	„ „	ए	and sounds like <i>e</i> in <i>bed</i> , only longer.	
o	„ „	ओ	„ „ „	<i>o</i> in <i>note</i> .
'	(apostrophe) stands for <i>s</i> (elided <i>a</i>).			
ch	stands for	च्	and sounds like <i>ch</i> in <i>church</i> .	
n	„ „	ङ्	(guttural), and may be pronounced like <i>n</i> .	
ñ	„ „	ञ्	(palatal), is like French <i>gn</i> , and may be pronounced like <i>n</i> .	
n	„ „	ण्	(lingual), and may be pronounced like <i>n</i> .	
t	and d stand for	ट् and ड्	and are hard like <i>t</i> and <i>d</i> in English.	
t	„ d „	त् and द्	and are soft as in French.	
l	stands for	ळ् (Tamil ள்)	and sounds like <i>l</i> in <i>all</i> .	
v	„ „	व्	and sounds like <i>w</i> .	
ś	„ „	श्	(palatal sibilant) and sounds like <i>sh</i> .	
sh	„ „	ष्	(lingual sibilant) and may be pronounced as in English.	

Such of the remaining consonants as appear in the transliterations sound as in English.

kh (ख्), gh (घ्), chh (छ्), jh (झ्), ṭh (ट्), ḍh (ड्), ṭh (थ्), ḍh (ध्), ph (फ्), bh (भ्) are the simple sounds *plus* an aspiration.

m stands for (*anusvāra*) and sounds like *ng*.

ḥ „ „ : (*visarga*).

Diacritical marks have not generally been used in the names of persons and institutions belonging to recent times as well as in well-known geographical names.

The following examples are taken from the book itself:—

Veda, *aham*, *panthā*, *sannyāsa*; *idam*, *isṭam*, *jīva*, *Iśa*; *upasampadā*, *mukti*, *rūpa*, *sūtra*; *Rig-Veda*, *ṛishi*, *netra*, *Kena*; *moksha*, *Om*; *yo'rjuna*, *so'ham*; *archanā*, *chitta*; *liṅga*, *Śaṅkarāchārya*; *jñāna*, *pañchajanāḥ*; *Kṛishṇa*, *taṇhā*; *viśiṣṭādvaita*, *Dhṛitarāshṭra*; *Muṇḍaka*; *Sitā*, *Taittirīya*, *Devī*, *Dānavas*; *Āṇḍāl*; *vidyā*, *Vārāhi*; *Śiva*, *Śaraṇadeva*; *Shad-samvāda*, *viśesha*; *saṁsāra*, *Iśūvāsyamidam sarvam*; *śāntih*, *duḥkha*, *Sāṁkhyā*, *khaḍga*; *Dīrghatama*, *Digha Nikāya*; *ichhā-śakti*, *Chhāndogya*; *Jhāyā*, *Majjhima Nikāya*; *Adhishṭhātrī*, *Kaṭha*; *Virudhaka*; *Maithili*, *Atharva-Veda*; *ādhāra*, *adhyāya*; *phala*, *phaṇi*; *bhakti*, *abhāva*.

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PART I

**SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY
PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS:
PREPARATION & PROGRAMME**

INTRODUCTORY

(a) SCOPE OF THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

It was in connection with the celebrations of the first Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna (1836—1886) that an International Parliament of Religions was held at Calcutta from March 1 to March 8, 1937. The celebrations had been going on since February, 1936, and continued until the middle of March, 1937, ending virtually with the Parliament itself.

Sri Ramakrishna is the prophet of freedom of conscience, harmony of faiths, religious toleration and inter-racial amity. His Birth Centenary called forth the widest support and co-operation from the intellectuals, academicians and social workers in the most diverse regions of the world. For instance, Burma, Ceylon, Straits Settlements, China, Japan, England, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia, East and South Africa, South America, U. S. A. and Australia joined in the Centenary celebrations and contributed to their character as an international spiritual event of the year.

The organizers of the Parliament invited papers on any subject of religion, morality, human progress and social ethics. No direct or indirect reference to India or Indian religions and philosophical systems, ancient, medieval or modern, was declared to be obligatory. The Parliament addressed itself to the most varied faiths and diverse systems of moral and spiritual tenets, old and new. The participants were at liberty to expound their own ideas and ideals in a scientific and philosophical manner, without any spirit of intolerance. The Parliament attempted to be as universal in its topical make-up and as world-wide in race as possible. And this was but a realization, however humble, as the organizers understood it, of Sri Ramakrishna's teaching to the effect that every faith is a path to God (*'Yata mat tata path'*).¹

¹ Sri Ramakrishna's own words in Bengali.

In an introductory lecture at the afternoon session on March 6 the scope of the Parliament of Religions was described by one of its Secretaries in the following words:

"We, have now gone through over fifty per cent. of the programme. It is obvious to everybody that the Chairmen of the different sessions have come from the remote corners of the world and that they represent not only diverse regions but diverse races and diverse religions as well. The papers that have been read as well as the lectures delivered up till now exhibit likewise the diversity and multiplicity of the Parliament's interests and the profoundly cosmopolitan or international character of its outlook.

"At this stage it may be relevant for the audience as well as the world of culture beyond the four walls of this great Town Hall¹ of Calcutta to get an idea of the scope that the organizers of this Parliament of Religions have had in view while inviting the different provinces of India as well as the different countries of the two hemispheres to take part in the proceedings of this International Congress. The present Parliament does not seek to establish a universal religion such as might be acceptable to all and sundry. Nor does the present Parliament propose to formulate schemes of world-peace through religious and allied programmes. It is not within the objectives of the present Parliament, therefore, to pass any resolutions or suggest any recommendations in regard to religious toleration, social reform, human brotherhood, class-solidarity or international fellowship.

"The Parliament of Religions, convened at Calcutta under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee, aims to function simply as the exchange or clearing-house of contemporary ideas on religion, morality, social welfare and human progress. Nothing more than being a mere medium for the ventilation of thoughts and opinions on what Ramakrishna would have called *mats* (faiths) and *paths* (ways) has been considered to be the function of this Parliament as conceived by the conveners.

"The Chairmen, the delegates, the paper-writers and the speakers can, then, be classified into several groups. In the first place may be mentioned those to whom religion, morality,

¹ It was here that the Parliament was held.

spiritual life, and indeed all the highest concerns of man, theoretical or applied, are topics of scientific study. They are generally described as anthropologists, psychologists, philosophers, sociologists, metaphysicians and researchers into ethics or human *mores*. No matter what their *personal* religious views or their faiths by birth they are in one word fundamentally the scientists of religion.

" The second group comprises those who are the exponents of the established or well-known religions of the world. They may be described as contributing to this Parliament the wealth of the tradition to which the men and the women of all races have been used for centuries. In many instances the faiths and *mores* described happen to be the personal faiths and *mores* of the writers or the speakers.

" Then there is another group which is made up of those who wish to see religion take a practical shape. And this practical shape they find, as a rule, in what is generally known as social work, organized philanthropy, social service and so forth.

" The fourth group of writers and speakers at this Parliament has likewise practical aims. They are the religious and social reformers of varied types. In their estimation the establishment of a better world-order, the promotion of amity between the races, the awakening of a new moral and spiritual sense in individual life, the organization of international brotherhood, the furthering of solidarity between the diverse classes, and the removal of barriers between the castes, the races, etc. in every nation ought to constitute the chief urge in religious activity.

" Last but not least, the present Parliament is privileged to have the co-operation of the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order. They have mustered strong, coming as they do from South India and Western India as well as the numerous centres of the Ramakrishna Mission in India and abroad, nay, from North and South America. They are all, each and everyone of them *karma-yogins* (activists and energists), consecrated to social service of the most varied forms. They are to be described also as *bhakti-yogins*, practising as they do meditation, prayer and other devotional exercises. But what is of special importance for this Parliament is that all of them are profound *jñāna-yogins* (intellectuals) as

well. They are students of psychology, ethics, metaphysics, philosophy, sociology and history. And they are liberal and tolerant enough in their religious and philosophical discussions to practise the democratic dictum of their great Master by believing that 'every faith is a path to God.'

"The Parliament of Religions is not identified with any one of the views already adumbrated or likely to be adumbrated in this Hall. But it cordially calls upon the audience, the delegates and other participants to bestow their interest, attention and patience on all the faiths and all the ways, old and new, traditional and futuristic, such as form the subject-matter of the papers and speeches.

"We are at liberty, no doubt, to appreciate the individual speeches and papers according to their bearings on our own subjective orientations. The real and adequate value of the present Parliament can, however, be assessed only if we rise beyond our personal equations and recognize the great reality that the most heterogeneous viewpoints and personalities have been brought together on a common platform."

(b) SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY COMMITTEES

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¹ The Ramakrishna Math is a monastery for the monks of the Ramakrishna Order, situated on the bank of the Ganges at Belur 6 miles north

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CHAPTER I

PROGRAMME OF THE FUNCTIONS AT THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

(a) THE PARLIAMENT

OPENING

MONDAY, THE 1ST MARCH, 1937

6—8-30 P.M.

Chairman—DR. SIR BRAJENDRA NATH SEAL, KT.,
Ex-Vice-Chancellor, Mysore University

- I. Vedic Hymn (in original Sanskrit) set to music by Mrs. Sarala Devi Chaudhuri.
- II. Address by the Chairman, Parliament of Religions Reception Committee, Sir Manmatha Nath Mukherjee, Ex-Chief Justice, High Court, Calcutta.
- III. Election of Dr. Sir Brajendra Nath Seal to the Chair.
Proposer: Sir B. L. Mitter, K.C.S.I., Member, Executive Council, Government of Bengal, Ex-Law Member, Government of India.
Seconder: Hirendra Nath Datta, M.A., B.L., P.R.S., Vedantaratna, Solicitor, Secretary, National Council of Education, Bengal, Calcutta.
- IV. Address by Dr. Sir Brajendra Nath Seal.
- V. (a) Messages from the Secretary of State for India (the Rt. Hon'ble Lord Zetland), and His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, the Rt. Hon'ble Sir John Anderson, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.I.E.,
Wire from Mahatma Gandhi.
- (b) Greetings from Far and Near.

VI. As Dr. Sir Brajendra Nath Seal felt unwell he left the chair and at his request Swami Abhedananda became chairman for the rest of the evening.

VII. Greetings by Delegates from Institutions in the East and the West:

The Sikhs: Sardar Jamaat Singh, Calcutta.

Mahabodhi Society: Secretary, Devapriya Valisinha, Calcutta.

Dev Samaj, Lahore: Dr. H. V. Sonpar.

Arya Samaj: Pandit Sukhdeoji Vidya-vachaspati, Calcutta.

The Jains: Jain Swetambar Terapanthi Sabha, Calcutta.

The Parsees: D. N. Wadia, Superintendent, Geological Survey of India, Indian Museum, Calcutta.

Theosophical Society, Calcutta: Secretary, Prof. Tulsidas Kar, M.A.

The Mussulmans of Bengal: Dr. R. Ahmed, Principal, Calcutta Dental College.

Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Belur: Swami Virajananda, Secretary.

National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations in India, Burma and Ceylon: S. Aiman, General Secretary, Calcutta.

The Jewish Community: J. A. Joseph, Bombay.

The Buddhists of Burma: Maung Aye Maung, Merchant, Rangoon.

Tibet: Ngak-Chhen Rinpoche, Prime Minister to the Tashi Lama. Sino-Indian Cultural Society and National Central Research Institute, Nanking, China: Prof. Tan Yun-Shun.

Iran: Shaik Abu Nasr Gilani, Gilan.

Iraq: Yusuf Ahmad Bagdadi, Bagdad.

Society for Promoting the Study of Religions, League of Nations Union, and Pali Text Society (London): Sir Francis Younghusband, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.

Kern Institute, Leyden (Holland): Dr. H. Goetz, PH.D.

United States of America: Dr. Peter Boike, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Krakow University (Poland): Mme. Prof. Helene de Willman-Grabowska, University, Krakow.

Vedanta Centre, Boston (Mass.) and Ananda Ashram, La Crescenta (Calif.), (U. S. A.): Swami Paramananda.

South Africa: Miss Helen Mary Boulnois, Johannesburg.
 International Federation of the Societies and Institutes of
 Sociology (Paris and Geneva): Delegate Prof. Benoy
 Kumar Sarkar, University, Calcutta.

VIII. Address by Swami Abhedananda.

Concluding Song

TUESDAY, THE 2ND MARCH, 1937

MORNING SESSION

8—10 A.M.

Chairman—DR. C. L. CHEN OF NANKING,
 Consul-General for China, Calcutta.

Opening Song

His Exalted Highness The Nizam of Hyderabad: Message. Read
 by Swami Sambuddhananda, Ramakrishna Math, Belur.

The Kumamoto Buddhist Federation of Japan: Message. Read
 by Swami Sambuddhananda.

The Buddhists of Ceylon: Message. Read by Swami Sambuddhananda.

Prof. Baron C. von Brockdorff, University, Kiel (Germany):
 Message. Read by Prof. Tulsidas Kar, Medical College,
 Calcutta.

Prof. Viscount Santa Clara of Spain, University, Calcutta:
 Message.

Prof. W. E. Hocking, Harvard University, Cambridge (Mass.),
 U. S. A.: Message. Read by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Address by the Chairman, Dr. C. L. Chen.

Prof. Charles A. Ellwood, PH.D., LL.D., Duke University, North
 Carolina (U. S. A.): The World's Need of Religious Unity.
 Read by Prof. Tulsidas Kar, Medical College, Calcutta.

Prof. Dr. S. Schayer, University, Warsaw (Poland): Humanism
 and Religiology. Read by Swami Bhuteshananda of
 Ramakrishna Math, Belur.

Mrs. Ruth Fry, Thorpens, Suffolk (England): Social Laws.
Read by Prof. C. Narayana Menon, M.A., PH.D., Hindu University, Benares.

President El-Maraghy, Al-Azhar University, Cairo (Egypt):
Islam. Read by Swami Sambuddhananda.

Prof. Suresh Chandra Sen Gupta, M.A., Vice-Principal, M. C. College, Sylhet (Assam): Religion and Life's Harmony.

Raja Kshitindra Deb Rai Mahasai of Bansberia Raj, Hooghly:
Sri Ramakrishna's Message to the Modern World.

Madame Sophia Wadia, Bombay: Bhagavad-Gita and Tao-te-ching.

T. H. M. Sadasivayya, Madras: Veerasaivism. Read by Swami Sambuddhananda.

Maulavi Idris Ahmad, M.L.A., Malda: Ideals of Islam (in Bengali).

Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, University, Calcutta: Religious Categories as Universal Expressions of Creative Personality.

Swami Srivasananda, Ramakrishna Ashram, Bangalore: Thanks and Appreciations.

Concluding Song

TUESDAY, THE 2ND MARCH, 1937

AFTERNOON SESSION

6—8-30 P.M.

Chairman—SWAMI ABHEDHANANDA

Opening Song

Mons. Romain Rolland, Villeneuve (Switzerland): Message (in French). English translation read by Swami Dayananda, Ramakrishna Mission Sisumangal Pratishthan (Maternity Home), Calcutta.

Prof. J. J. von Schmid, University, Leyden (Holland): Message.
Read by Dr. D. P. Ghosh, Calcutta.

Prof. H. Ui, Imperial University, Tokyo (Japan): Message. Read by Swami Sambuddhananda.

Pandit Sukhdeoji Vidya-vachaspati, Arya Samaj, Calcutta: Universal Religion.

Rev. J. M. Nichols-Roy, Ex-Minister, Assam Government, Shillong: The Spirit of Christ. Reported by Swami Sambuddhananda.

President F. B. Robinson, College of the City of New York, U. S. A.: Vivekananda. Reported by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Address by the Chairman, Swami Abhedananda.

Mrs. Shirin Fozdar, Bombay: The Bahai Religion.

Prof. Harimohan Bhattacharyya: Vairagyam (Life of Detachment).

Madame Sophia Wadia, Bombay: The Inner Significance of the Parliament of Religions.

Swami Madhavananda, Asst. Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Belur: The Need of the Modern World.

Swami Sambuddhananda: Thanks and Appreciations.

Concluding Song

WEDNESDAY, THE 3RD MARCH, 1937

MORNING SESSION

8—10 A.M.

Chairman—KAKA KALELKAR

Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Parishad (Indian Hindi Literature Society), Wardha, C. P.

Opening Song

Prof. Louis Renou, Director, Ecole des Hautes Etudes, Paris (France): Message (in French). English translation read by Mons. Jean Herbert of Paris.

A. Van Stalk, Amsterdam (Holland): Message. Read by Dr. Gulatherus H. Mees of Leyden, Holland.

Rev. F. E. Fisher, Central Church, Methodist Episcopal, Detroit (Mich.), U. S. A.: Message. Reported by Swami Sambuddhananda.

Prof. C. Narly, PH.D., University, Cernauti (Rumania): *Destiny of Man*. Read by Swami Pavitrnananda, sometime Editor, *Prabuddha Bharata* (Calcutta).

Address by the Chairman, Kaka Kalelkar.

Letter from Mahatma Gandhi.

Prof. Gilbert Slater, University, Oxford (England): *Christendom's Need of Christ*. Read by Mr. F. Rossetti of the Y. M. C. A., Calcutta.

Prof. Nil Ratan Dhar, D.Sc. (London and Paris), F.I.C., I.E., University, Allahabad: *Science and Religion*. Read by Mr. Bhupendra Krishna Basu, Calcutta, Secretary, Second Convention of Religions in India (Calcutta, 1911).

Prof. Leopold von Wiese, University, Cologne (Germany): *The Idea of Religion*. Read by Dr. S. C. Das-Gupta, Calcutta.

Prof. B. V. Das Gupta, Dacca: *Some Aspects of Bengal Vaishnavism*.

Prof. Tan Yun-Shan, Sino-Indian Cultural Federation, Nanking: *What is Chinese Religion?*

Prof. Kshetralal Saha, M.A., Nalanda College, Patna (Bihar): *Religion in India*.

Pandit Vishwanath Atmaram Borwanker, Jhansi, U. P.: *Complexity of Hindu Religion (Dharma)*.

Prof. N. K. Datta, M.A., PH.D., Sanskrit College, Calcutta: *Brahmacharya in Ancient India*.

Prof. M. Ishikawa, Tokyo: *Introduction to Shinto Theology*. Reported by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Prof. P. V. Serebriakov-Elboursky: *Sociological Determinations (in French)*. Reported by Swami Sambuddhananda.

Swami Paramananda, Vedanta Centre, Boston (Mass.) and Ananda Ashram, La Crescenta (Calif.), U. S. A.: *Observations*.

Sir Francis Younghusband (London): *Observations on the Letter from Mahatma Gandhi as well as Appreciations and Thanks*.

WEDNESDAY, THE 3RD MARCH, 1937

AFTERNOON SESSION

6—8-30 P.M.

Chairman—RABINDRA NATH TAGORE

Opening Song

Prof. Giorgio Del Vecchio, University, Rome (Italy): Message (in Italian). English translation read by Swami Sambuddhananda, Ramakrishna Math, Belur.

Prof. Jean Przyluski, University, Paris (France): Message (in French). English translation read by Mons. Jean Herbert (Paris).

Address by the Chairman, Rabindra Nath Tagore.

F. Rossetti, Y. M. C. A. (Calcutta): A New World Impetus.

Swami Paramananda, Vedanta Centre, Boston, Mass, U. S. A.: Observations.

Hirendranath Datta, M.A., B.L., P.R.S., Vedantaratra, Attorney-at-Law, Calcutta: Hinduism.

Swami Nirvedananda, Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Gouripur, Dum Dūm: Sri Ramakrishna and Universal Religion.

Sir Francis Younghusband (London): Observations.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu (Hyderabad and Bombay): Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.

Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar: Thanks and Appreciations.

Concluding Song

THURSDAY, THE 4TH MARCH, 1937

MORNING SESSION

8—10 A.M.

Chairman—**SWAMI PARAMANANDA**,
Vedanta Centre, Boston (Mass.), and Ananda Ashram,
La Crescenta (Calif.), U. S. A.

Opening Song

- Prof. G. Vladesco-Racoassa, University, Bucharest (Rumania):
Message. Read by Mr. Bejoy Krishna Bose, Advocate,
Calcutta.
- Lady Ezra, Calcutta: Message. Read by Mr. J. A. Joseph,
Bombay.
- President G. Matsumoto, Nippon Bunka Renmei (Nippon Cul-
tural Federation), Member, House of Peers, Tokyo:
Message. Reported by Swami Sambuddhananda.
- Prof. J. K. Kochanowski, University, Warsaw (Poland): Some
Notes on Religions (in French). English translation
read by Mme. Prof. Helene de Willman-Grabowska of
Krakow (Poland).
- Dr. J. Leyder, Institut Solvay, Brussels (Belgium): Trial by
Poison in Primitive Law (in French). English translation
read by Mons. Jean Herbert (Paris).
- President Lim Boon Keng, Amoy University, China: Rama-
krishna. Read by Swami Srivasananda, Ramakrishna
Ashram, Bangalore.
- Count H. Keyserling, Darmstadt (Germany): The Cross and the
Eagle (in German). English translation read by Mr. Shiva
Kumar Shastri of Lahore.
- Prof. R. C. Thurnwald, University, Berlin (Germany): The
Drama of Mankind in its Religious Aspect. Read by
Sister Amala of the U. S. A.
- Prof. A. Niceforo, University, Rome: Three Souls of Man in
Dante's Hell. Reported by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.
Address by the Chairman, Swami Paramananda.

- Prof. Gurumukh Nihal Singh, Hindu University, Benares: Greetings from the All-India Sikh Mission, Amritsar, Punjab.
- Guru Saday Dutt, I.C.S., Secretary, Local Self-Government and Medical Department, Government of Bengal: Greetings from the Bratachari Movement.
- Prof. Prabhu Dutt Shastri, Presidency College, Calcutta: The Vedantic Conception of Peace.
- Dr. A. C. Ukil, Director, Tuberculosis Research, Indian Research Fund Association, Calcutta: Social Service in Public Health.
- Prof. Batuk Nath Bhattacharjee, Ripon College, Calcutta: The Gospel of Harmony.
- Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar: Appreciations and Thanks

Concluding Song

THURSDAY, THE 4TH MARCH, 1937

AFTERNOON SESSION

6—8-30 P.M.

Chairman—SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.,
Chairman, Society for Promoting the Study of Religions, London.

Opening Song

- Prof. G. L. Duprat, University, Geneva (Switzerland), General Secretary, International Federation of the Societies and Institutes of Sociology (Paris): Message (in French). English translation read by Mr. Bejoy Krishna Bose, Advocate, Calcutta
- Senator Achille Loria, Professor, University of Turin: Message. Read by Swami Adyananda, sometime representative of the Ramakrishna Mission in South and East Africa.
- Swami Khanse O Kochi, Buddhist Association, Kyoto (Japan): Message (in Japanese). Reported by Swami Sambuddhananda.
- Mandaliswara Swami Bhagavatananda of Benares: Greetings (in Sanskrit). Interpreted in English by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Address by the Chairman, Sir Francis Younghusband (Broadcasted).

Swami Sharvananda, Asst. Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and President, Ramakrishna Ashram, Delhi and Karachi: The Religion of Realization.

Anagarika B. Govinda, General Secretary, International Buddhist University Association, Sarnath, Benares: Buddhism in the Modern World.

Maulavi Zillur Rahman, Ahmadiya Association, Dacca: Liberalism in Islam (in Bengali). Interpreted in English by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Prof. Sir Jahangirjee Coyajee, Andhra University, Bezwada (Madras): The Spirit of Zoroaster.

Sardar Jamait Singh, Calcutta: Sikhism (in Hindi), Interpreted in English by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Advocate Santosh Kumar Basu, Ex-Mayor, Calcutta Corporation: Vivekananda and Social Service.

Swami Vijayananda, Ramakrishna Ashram, Buenos Aires, Argentina (South America): Greetings.

Swami Vishwananda, Ramakrishna Ashram, Bombay: Thanks and Appreciations.

Concluding Song

FRIDAY, THE 5TH MARCH, 1937

MORNING SESSION

8—10 A.M.

Chairman—PROF. MUHAMMAD ALI SHIRAZI of Iran,
University, Calcutta.

Opening Song

Prof. C. Gini, University, Rome (Italy): Message (in Italian).
English translation read by Mons. Jean Herbert (Paris).

Mrs. C. M. Beach, Secretary, World Meditation Groups, Surrey (England): Message. Read by Prof. Gurmukh Singh, Hindu University, Benares.

The late Prof. Dr. M. Winternitz, German University, Prague (Czechoslovakia): Race and Religion. Read by Mons. J. Herbert (Paris).

Sridhar Majumdar, M.A., Barisal (Bengal): Where We are One.

A. Srinivasachariar, Teacher, B.A., L.T., Srivilliputtur, Ramnad, (Madras Presidency): The Doctrine of Self-surrender. Read by Swami Srivasananda, Ramakrishna Ashram, Bangalore.

Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L., District and Sessions Judge (Retd.), Madras: Ramakrishna. Read by Swami Siddheswarananda, President, Ramakrishna Ashram, Bangalore, now in Paris.

Prof. Baron C. von Brockdorff, University, Kiel (Germany): Inward Veracity in its Religious Sense. Read by Mr. F. Rossetti of the Y. M. C. A., Calcutta.

Address by the Chairman, Prof. M. A. Shirazi.

Devapriya Valisinha, Secretary, Mahabodhi Society, Calcutta: The Buddhist Way of Life.

Swami Dhananjaya Das, Brindaban, U. P.: Dvaitadvaita Siddhanta (in Bengali).

Prof. C. Narayan Menon, M.A., PH.D., Hindu University, Benares: The Spiritual Foundations of Economics.

Sri Sankar Bhumananda Tirthaswami of Kathiawar (Gujarat): Greetings (in Hindi). Interpreted in English by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Swami Siddheswarananda, President, Ramakrishna Ashram, Bangalore, now in Paris: Thanks and Appreciations.

Concluding Song

FRIDAY, THE 5TH MARCH, 1937

AFTERNOON SESSION

6—8-30 P.M.

Chairman—PROF. D. R. BHANDARKAR of Poona,
Sometime Carmichael Professor of Ancient Indian
History and Culture, University, Calcutta.

Opening Song

Swami Sambuddhananda: Reading the telegram from Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Vice-Chancellor, Hindu University, Benares, regretting inability to come to Calcutta on account of ill-health and preside at the session.

Prof. P. Sorokin, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. (U. S. A.): Message. Read by Swami Pavitrnananda, sometime Editor, *Prabuddha Bharata*, Calcutta.

S. Ando, Secretary, Nipon Bunka Renmei (Japan Cultural Federation): Message. Read by Mons. J. Herbert (Paris). Address by the Chairman, Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar.

Swami Vishwananda, President, Ramakrishna Ashram, Bombay: The Unity of Religions (Broadcasted).

Maulavi Zillur Rahman, Bengal Provincial Ahmadiya Association, Dacca: The Teachings of Islam as a Path to God (in Bengali). Interpreted in English by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Prof. Gurumukh Nihal Singh, Hindu University, Benares: The Sikh Ideal.

Swami Vijayananda, Ramakrishna Ashram, Buenos Aires, Argentina (South America): Religion and Philosophy.

Dr. H. Goetz, Kern Institute, Leyden, Holland: The Social Aspect of Religion in the Crises of Human History.

Prof. Emile Lasbax, University, Clermont-Ferrand (France), Editor, *Revue Internationale de Sociologie* (Paris): The Rhythm of Sacrifice and the Rhythm of Prayer (in French). Reported by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

- Mrs. Saudamini Mehta of Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Calcutta: The Spirit of Social Service in India.
- Prof. Tulsidas Kar, M.A., Secretary, Theosophical Society, Calcutta: Theosophy.
- Swami Ghanananda, Ramakrishna Math, Belur: Thanks and Appreciations.

Concluding Song

SATURDAY, THE 6TH MARCH, 1937.

MORNING SESSION

8—10 A.M.

Chairman—MAHAMAHOPADHYAYA PROFESSOR PRAMATHA NATH
TARKABHUSHAN, Hindu University, Benares.

Opening Song

- Prof. E. Williams, University, Berkeley, California (U. S. A.): Message. Read by Mons. Jean Herbert (Paris).
- Prof. S. Angus, St. Andrews Hall, Sydney (Australia): Message. Read by Dr. G. H. Mees, Leyden (Holland).
- Earl of Sandwich, London: Message (Cable). Read by Sir Francis Younghusband, London.
- Prof. A. Berriedale Keith, University, Edinburgh (Scotland): Morality and Political Power. Read by Mr. F. Rossetti of the Y. M. C. A. (Calcutta).
- Prof. G. L. Duprat, University, Geneva (Switzerland): Social Equilibrium (in French). English translation read by Prof. Batuk Nath Bhattacharya, Ripon College, Calcutta.
- Shib Chandra Vidyavinod: Brahmanubhuti (in Bengali). Interpreted in English by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.
- Mme. Prof. Helene de Willman-Grabowska, University, Krakow (Poland): Sankaracharya and Thomas Aquinas.
- Prof. Mrs. Gisella Munira Craig, University, Rome (Italy): The Sufi Movement in Europe. Read by Dr. G. H. Mees, Leyden (Holland).
- Jean Herbert, Paris: Diversity in Unity.

Prof. Saroj Kumar Das, University, Calcutta: Sri Ramakrishna as the Prophet of the Church Invisible.

Address by the Chairman, Prof. Pramatha Nath Tarkabhushan.

Prof. Nalinaksha Datta, University, Calcutta: Japanese Buddhism.

Principal P. V. Kanai, Rumsukh Dass College, Ferozepur City (Punjab): The Religion of Dev Samaj. Read by Dr. H. V. Sonpar of Lahore.

Prof. Dakshinaraman Sastri, Sanskrit College, Calcutta: An Introduction to the Study of Chandi.

Pratulla Kumar Sarkar, Calcutta Training School: A Message of the New Era.

Prof. K. Lahiri, Calcutta: The Message of Truth.

Kaka Kalelkar, Wardha, C. P.: The Future of Religion.

Swami Sambuddhananda: Thanks and Appreciations.

Concluding Song

SATURDAY, THE 6TH MARCH, 1937.

AFTERNOON SESSION

6—8-30 P.M.

Chairman—**MRS. SARAJINI NAIDU,**
Hyderabad (Deccan) and Bombay.

Opening Song

Prof. J. M. Peritch, University, Belgrade (Yugoslavia): Message (in French): English translation read by Dr. Peter Boike of Cincinnati, Ohio (U. S. A.), Calcutta.

Prof. T. Herseni, University, Bucharest (Rumania): Message (in French). English translation read by Mons. J. Herbert (Paris).

Prof. G. Tucci, University, Rome, Member of the Italian Academy: Message. Read by Swami Vishwananda, President, Ramakrishna Ashram, Bombay.

Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, University, Calcutta: The Scope of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Parliament of Religions.

Mrs. Sarala Devi Chaudhuri, Calcutta: The Esoteric Science of the Aryan Rishis.

Jean Herbert, author, Paris (France): Ramakrishna in Europe.

Prof. Pramathanath Tarkabhushan, Hindu University, Benares: Observations (in Bengali).

Swami Paramananda, Vedanta Centre, Boston (Mass.) and Ananda Ashram, La Crescenta (Calif.), U. S. A.: Sri Ramakrishna—the Messiah of Spiritual Democracy.

Prof. Khagendra Nath Mitra, Delegate, University, Calcutta: Greetings from the University.

Ananda Kausalyayana, Mahabodhi Society, Sarnath, Benares: Buddhism (in Hindi and English).

Ramananda Chatterjee, M.A., Editor, *Modern Review*, Calcutta: Profession and Realization, and Path and No Path.

Swami Vijayananda, Ramakrishna Ashram, Buenos Aires, Argentina (South America): Observations.

Address by the Chairman, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.

Principal Benjamin Richard, Victoria College, Mauritius (Africa): Islam and Human Welfare.

Swami Nirvedananda, Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Gouripur, Dum-Dum: Thanks and Appreciations.

Concluding Song

SUNDAY, THE 7TH MARCH, 1937

MORNING SESSION

8—10 A.M.

Chairman—MADAME ADELINA DEL CARRIL DE GUIRALDES,
Buenos Aires, Argentina (South America).

Opening Song

Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar: Introducing Madame Guiraldes.

Rector W. Szafer, University, Krakow (Poland): Message. Read by Mons. J. Herbert (Paris)

- Prof. E. A. Ross, University, Madison, Wisconsin (U. S. A.): Message. Read by Mr. Shiva Kumar Shastri of Lahore.
- Prof. P. Masson-Oursel, University, Paris (France): The Indian Modes of Revelation. Read by Mons. J. Herbert (Paris).
- Prof. Girindra Narayan Mallik, Victoria College, Comilla (Bengal): Religion and Morality.
- Address by the Chairman, Madame Guiraldes (in Spanish): The English translation was read by Mons. Jean Herbert (Paris).
- Prof. Vishva Bandhu Sastri, M.A., M.O.L., Director, Visvesvaranand Vedic Research Institute, Lahore, and Research Department, D. A. V. College, Lahore: Religion and Rationalism in Ancient Hindu Culture.
- Prof. Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar, M.A., PH.D., Presidency College, Calcutta: Sri Ramakrishna, A Study in Spiritual Consciousness.
- Prof. Gurumukh Nihal Singh, Hindu University, Benares: Sikhism as a Modern Religion.
- Prof. F. Hankins, Editor, *American Sociological Review*, Smith College, Northampton, Mass (U. S. A.): Thomas Paine and the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary. Read by Swami Pavitrانanda, sometime Editor, *Prabuddha Bharata*.
- Prof. Adhar Chandra Das, University, Calcutta: The Synthesis of Religion in Ramakrishna.
- Prof. E. Horowitz, Hunter College, New York: The Bhagavatas. Ramani Kanta Datta-Gupta, Dacca: The Problem of World Peace. Madame Sophia Wadia, Bombay: Ramakrishna's Teachings in Argentina.
- Rao Bahadur C. Ramanujachariar, B.A., Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras: Thanks.
- Sir Francis Younghusband, London: Thanks and Appreciations.

Concluding Song

SUNDAY, THE 7TH MARCH, 1937

AFTERNOON SESSION

6—8-30 P.M.

Chairman—MANDALISWARA SWAMI BHAGAVATANANDA GIRI,
Benares.

Opening Song

Hymn (in Sanskrit) by Ramanuja.

Prof. R. C. Thurnwald, University, Berlin: Message. Read by
Swami Sambuddhananda.

Muhammad Hasan Kashani, Yezd (Iran): Message (in Persian).
English translation read by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Yusuf Ahmad Bagdadi, Bagdad, Iraq: Ramakrishna through
Moslem Eyes.

Prof. G. E. Monod-Herzen, Kabul (Afghanistan): Ramakrishna
(in French). English translation read by Mons. J. Herbert
(Paris).

Miss Nirmala Devi, Ahmedabad (Gujarat): Dharma (in Sanskrit).
Interpreted in English by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Sister Saraswati, Ramakrishna College for Women, Calcutta:
Women and Religion.

Mandaliswara Swami Krishnananda Giriji, Benares: Rama-
krishna (in Hindi): Interpreted in English by Prof.
Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Swami Adyananda, sometime representative of the Ramakrishna
Mission in South and East Africa: Sri Ramakrishna and the
Religion of Man.

Prof. J. R. Banerjee, Ex-Principal, Vidyasagar College, Calcutta:
The Christian Viewpoint.

J. A. Joseph, Bombay: The Teachings of Hebrew Prophets.

Prof. Pramatha Nath Tarkabhushan, Benares: The Meaning of
Ramakrishna's Advent (in Bengali).

Madame Sophia Wadia, Bombay: Theosophy.

Swami Sharvananda, Ramakrishna Ashram, Delhi and Karachi:
Distinguishing Features of Hinduism.

Address by the Chairman, Swami Bhagavatananda Giri, Mandaliswara (in Hindi). Interpreted in English by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Mandaliswara Swami Krishnananda Giriji, Benares: Ramakrishna (in Hindi): Interpreted in English by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Srish Chandra Chatterjee, Calcutta: Religion and Architecture (Lantern Lecture).

Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar: Thanks and Appreciations (in Hindi and English).

Concluding Song

MONDAY, THE 8TH MARCH, 1937

MORNING SESSION

8—10 A.M.

**Chairman—DR. FRANK VENCESLAUS TOUSEK, of Prague,
Consul for Czechoslovakia, Calcutta.**

Opening Song

Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar: Introducing Dr. Tousek.

Prof. Herbert G. Wood, Birmingham (England): Message. Read by Mr. F. Rossetti of the Y. M. C. A., Calcutta.

Dr. F. Thierfelder, Deutsche Akademie, Munich, (Germany): Message (in German). English translation read by Dr. G. H. Mees, Leyden (Holland).

Maung Aye Maung, Rangoon (Burma): Buddhism and Modern Science.

Nagendra Kumar Roy, Dacca: Vaishnava Philosophy (in Bengali). Interpreted in English by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Advocate Jitendra Sankar Das Gupta, Calcutta: The Ideal of Indian Sainthood.

President F. Zahn, Bavarian Statistical Bureau, Munich (Germany): The Human Factor in the Formation of Capital

- (in German). English translation read by Swami Paramananda of Boston and La Crescenta, U. S. A.
- V. Subrahmanya Iyer, Registrar, Mysore University (Retd.), Mysore: Religion and Philosophy. Read by Swami Siddheswarananda of Ramakrishna Ashram, Bangalore.
- Dr. Gulatherus H. Mees, M.A. (Cantab), LL.D. (Leyden), Leyden (Holland): Sri Ramakrishna and Religious Symbology.
- Major Prabhat Kumar Bardhan, Calcutta: A Layman's View of Religion.
- Chhogmal Chopra, Honorary Secretary, Jaina Swetambar Terapanthi Sabha, Calcutta: The Tenets of the Jaina Faith.
- Dr. Bhagavan Das, Benares: The Essential Unity of all Religions. Read by Swami Sambuddhananda.
- Prof. Haridas Bhattacharya: Some Obstacles to Toleration. Read by Swami Pavitrnananda, sometime Editor, *Prabuddha Bharata*, Calcutta.
- Prof. J. M. Peritch, University, Belgrade (Jugoslavia): An Inconsistent Continent (in French). English translation read by Swami Vijayananda, Ramakrishna Ashram, Buenos Aires, Argentina (South America).
- Mlle. M. Chovin, Toulouse (France): The Conquest of the Grail. Read by Mons. J. Herbert (Paris).
- Address by the Chairman, Dr. Tousek.
- Hari Mohan Banerjee, President, United Mission, Calcutta: Religion.
- Swami Tirthaswami of Kashiwar (Gujarat): Observations (in Hindi).
- Srimat Swami Kalikrishnananda Giri, Calcutta: The Avadhuta School of Saktas.
- Prof. Susil Kumar Maitra, University, Calcutta: The Nature of Religion, the View of a Modern Scientist.
- Swami Paramananda, Vedanta Centre, Boston (Mass.) and Ananda Ashram, La Crescenta (Calif.), U. S. A.: Observations.
- Sir Francis Younghusband, London: Thanks and Appreciations.

Concluding Song

MONDAY, THE 8TH MARCH, 1937

AFTERNOON SESSION

6—9 P.M.

Chairman—PROF. A. B. DHRUVA of Ahmedabad (Gujarat),
Hindu University, Benares.

Opening Song

Swami Sambuddhananda: Introducing Prof. A. B. Dhruva.

Prof. O. Spann, University, Vienna (Austria): Message (in German). English translation read by Mr. J. C. Das, Banker, Calcutta.

Prof. Tan Yun-Shan, Sino-Indian Cultural Society, Nanking (China): Message. Read by Mons. Jean Herbert (Paris).

Address by the Chairman, Prof. A. B. Dhruva.

Bejoy Chandra Chatterjee, Bar-at-Law, Calcutta: The Spirit of Vivekananda.

Swami Suddhananda, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission: Ramakrishna.

Sarat Chandra Bose, Bar-at-Law, Calcutta: Ramakrishna's Teachings.

Maharajadhiraja Bahadur Sir Bijay Chand Mahtab, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., of Burdwan: Ramakrishna.

Parsidh Narayan, Gaya: Harmony in Science and Religion.

Rao Bahadur C. Ramanujachariar, B.A., Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras: Social Service.

Principal Benjamin Richard, Victoria College, Mauritius: Islam.

Prof. Pramathanath Tarkabhushan, Hindu University, Benares: Observations.

Swami Sambuddhananda: Hinduism of To-morrow.

Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, University, Calcutta: Religion, Society and the Individual.

Farewell Addresses by

Advocate Bejoy Krishna Bose, Secretary, Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee, Calcutta.

Dr. C. L. Chen, Consul-General for China, Calcutta.

Dr. H. V. Sonpar, Dev Samaj, Lahore.

C. H. M. Rustomjee, Advocate, Calcutta.

Devapriya Valisinha, Secretary, Mahabodhi Society, Calcutta.

Yusuf Ahmad Bagdadi, Bagdad (Iraq).

Sister Amala, U. S. A.

Swami Sharvananda, Ramakrishna Ashram, Delhi and Karachi.

Mme. Prof. Willman-Grabowska, Krakow (Poland).

Sir Francis Younghusband, London.

Maulavi Zillur Rahman, Bengal Provincial Ahmadiya Association,
Dacca.

Jean Herbert, Paris.

Dr. Hermann Goetz, PH.D., Kern Institute, Leyden (Holland).

Swami Paramananda, Vedanta Centre, Boston (Mass.) and Ananda
Ashram, La Crescenta (Calif.), U. S. A.

Dr. Dwaraka Nath Mitter, ex-Justice, High Court, Calcutta.

Sardar Jamait Singh, Calcutta.

Dr. Peter Boike of Cincinnati, Ohio (U. S. A.), Calcutta:
Universal Prayer.

Mandaliswara Swami Bhagavatananda Giri, Benares (in Hindi).

Concluding Observations and Thanks by Prof. Benoy Kumar
Sarkar.

Concluding Song

(b) SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

THURSDAY, THE 4TH MARCH, 1937

4 P.M.—Tea at the Grand Hotel, Prince's Restaurant, Calcutta.

Host: Ramakrishna Medical Education Society, Calcutta.

A tribute to the good work that is being done by the Ramakrishna Medical Education Society in the matter of spreading medical education among the women of this country was paid by Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore in a message to its Secretary, Sister Saraswati, which was read at a tea party given by the Society at the Grand Hotel in honour of the delegates to the Parliament of Religions.

"Perhaps the noblest tribute to the memory of Sri Ramakrishna," said the Poet in the message, "is the silent selfless

service that has been released under his inspiration. One of the many such organised humanitarian activities is the Ramakrishna Medical Education Society whose Secretary, Sister Saraswati, has asked for my good wishes, which I give most willingly, along with my congratulations, for the splendid work the Society has been doing."

With a view to enabling them to expand their activities, an appeal for funds was issued by the Society who needed their own buildings to accommodate the Hospital and College.

FRIDAY, THE 5TH MARCH, 1937

4 P.M.—Tea at the University of Calcutta. Host: Arts Faculty Club.

SATURDAY, THE 6TH MARCH, 1937

2-30 P.M.—Bratachari Dance Demonstrations at the Town Hall, Calcutta, followed by tea. Host: Guru Saday Dutt, I.C.S., President, Bratachari Society, Calcutta.

Mr. G. S. Dutt, Secretary, Local Self-Government and Medical Department, Government of Bengal, Founder-President of the Bratachari movement, delivered an address on the regeneration of religious harmony and national unity through the Bratachari movement. Sir Francis Younghusband presided.

The lecture was illustrated by Bratachari demonstrations by a party of Bratacharis from Ashutosh College, Calcutta and a party of girl Bratacharis from Ramesh Mitter Girls' High School. At the conclusion of the demonstration Sir Francis Younghusband said that he and other delegates to the Parliament of Religions appreciated the spiritual aspect of the Bratachari movement. He believed that the movement was founded on eternal truth, rhythm and joy and was destined to play an important part in the spiritual regeneration of humanity in all countries. Mr. Dutt was also congratulated by delegates from several foreign countries. They expressed deep interest in the sincerity and vigour of spirit which was exhibited in the demonstrations and which they believed would help in building up a regenerated Indian nation.

Mr. Bejoy Krishna Bose and Swami Sambuddhananda moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Dutt and the Bratacharis on behalf of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations Committee.

SATURDAY, THE 6TH MARCH, 1937

4-30 P.M.—Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Exhibition of Indian Culture, Arts and Industries, Northern Park, Bhowanipur, Calcutta: Visit by the Delegates.

SUNDAY, THE 7TH MARCH, 1937

1 P.M.—Lunch at Firpo's Branch Restaurant, 11, Government Place, Calcutta. Host: Mrs. and Dr. Peter Boike of Cincinnati, Ohio (U. S. A.), Calcutta.

SUNDAY, THE 7TH MARCH, 1937

3 P.M.—Reception at the Sikh Temple, Kalighat, Calcutta. Chief host: Sardar Jamait Singh.

The Sikh residents of Calcutta organised a reception to the world delegates of the Parliament of Religions. More than 4,000 Sikhs including 1,000 ladies gathered on the occasion and the rush was so great that vast crowds had to wait outside the hall on the Rashbehari Avenue. Loud speakers were installed on the road leading to the temple. Exactly at 3 p.m. Mrs. Naidu accompanied by Sir Francis Younghusband and other delegates, foreign and Indian, arrived at the Temple in a fleet of 40 motor cars which the Calcutta taxi drivers had placed at the disposal of the guests free of charge. More than 200 delegates and Swamis of the Ramakrishna Mission attended. The whole Temple was tastefully decorated and on their arrival the guests were given a guard of honour by about 50 Akali Dal volunteers clad in saffron and with swords in hand. The whole Temple was resounding with the cry of *Sat Sri Akāl* from time to time. Sardar Bhagat Singh, Sardar Jamait Singh and Prof. Gurumukh Nihal Singh (Hindu University, Benares) welcomed the guests on behalf of the community and garlanded all the guests. The ladies on the balconies showered flowers on them.

Mrs. Naidu thanked the Sikhs for organising the reception and paid high tributes to the Sikh community and appealed for unity amongst the different religions of the world. Sir Francis Younghusband, Swami Paramananda, Mrs. Sarala Devi Chaudhuri, Dr. Peter Boike (U. S. A.), Mr. Rustomjee, Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar, Swami Sambuddhananda, Mr. Maung (Rangoon), Mr. Yusuf Ahmad Bagdadi (Bagdad), Dr. Sonpar of Lahore, Madame Prof. Willman-Grabowska (Poland), Dr. H. Goetz (Holland) and others addressed the gathering.

Srimati Amrit Kaur and Sardar Jamaat Singh who were instrumental in organising the function were all attention to the guests. At departure each delegate was presented with a photo of Guru Nanak, and huge crackers were fired.

SUNDAY, THE 7TH MARCH, 1937

4-30 P.M.—Tea at the Pareshnath (Jaina) Temple, North Calcutta.
Hosts: The Jaina Community.

MONDAY, THE 8TH MARCH, 1937

4 P.M.—Tea at the Ramakrishna Math and Mission Headquarters, Belur (Howrah).

The delegates and other participants, both Indian and foreign, in the World Parliament of Religions enjoyed a nice steamer trip when they went to attend the tea party that was given in their honour at the Belur Math. They left the Chandpal Ghat at about 2-30 P.M. in two steamers which were placed at the disposal of the Parliament by Raja Janaki Nath Roy of Bhagyakul. The Raja Sahib who accompanied the party with his son, Kumar Narendra Nath Roy, made a special arrangement for Indian music on board the steamers for the entertainment of the distinguished guests. The party first went to Dakshineswar, the place of Sri Ramakrishna's *sādhana* and then to Belur Math, the nerve-centre of the Mission's world-wide activities.

On landing at Belur the delegates were received by Swami Paramananda, Head of the Boston Vedanta Centre, on behalf of

the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. The Swami thanked them all for the trouble they had taken in coming over to India, some from distant foreign lands, at so much personal sacrifice, to participate in the Centenary Celebrations. Sir Francis Younghusband, on behalf of the foreign delegates and representatives, gave a suitable reply. After tea, they were shown round the shrine and other holy places. They all seemed to take particular interest in the new temple that is under construction. They all returned by the same boats at about 5 P.M. to the Town Hall, Calcutta, quite in time for the concluding session of the Parliament.

TUESDAY, THE 9TH MARCH, 1937

1-15 P.M.—Lunch at Firpo's Branch Restaurant, 11, Government Place, Calcutta. Hosts: Sir Manmatha Nath Mukherjee, Chairman, Parliament of Religions Reception Committee and Mr. Kumar Krishna Mitter, Attorney-at-Law, Calcutta.

WEDNESDAY, THE 10TH MARCH, 1937

- 3 P.M.—Star Theatre, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. *Sitā* staged by Prof. Sisir Bhaduri. Host: Dr. D. P. Ghosh.
- 4 P.M.—Tea at 7, Mohan Bagan Lane, Calcutta. Host: Mr. Birendra Kumar Bose, Advocate.

THURSDAY, THE 11TH MARCH, 1937

4-30 P.M.—Tea at 21, Ballygunge Circular Road, Calcutta. Hosts: Mr. Bejoy Chandra Chatterjee, Bar-at-Law (Secretary, Parliament of Religions) and Mrs. Chatterjee.

SATURDAY, THE 13TH MARCH, 1937

7 P.M.—Tea at 78, Baghbazar Street, Calcutta. Hosts: Haranath Siksha Sangha.

Guests at the Social Functions

I

Amongst those present at many of these social functions were the following persons:—

Swami Adyananda (of South and East Africa)

Major and Mrs. D. Ahmad

Dr. and Mrs. Rafi Ahmed

Mrs. P. O. Allen (U. S. A.)

Sister Amala (U. S. A.)

Swami Atmabodhananda

Mr. Yusuf Ahmed Bagdadi (Bagdad, Iraq)

Mr. Suren Ball (Curator, Industrial Section, Indian Museum) and Mrs. Ball

Dr. D. N. Banerjee

Major Prabhat Kumar Bardhan

Mr. Jatindra Nath Basu, M.L.C., Solicitor

Advocate Narendra Kumar Basu

Advocate Santosh Kumar Basu

Prof. and Mrs. D. R. Bhandarkar (Poona)

Frau Ingrid Biermann (Germany)

Dr. and Mrs. A. M. Bose

Advocate Bejoy Krishna Bose

Advocate Birendra Kumar Bose

Mr. A. P. Blair (London)

Dr. and Mrs. Peter Boike (Cincinnati, Ohio, U. S. A.)

Mrs. Kiron Bose (Bengal Provincial Women's Association)

Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Bar-at-Law

Miss Helen Mary Boulnois (Johannesburg, South Africa)

Mrs. Ten Broek (U. S. A.)

Mr. Surendra Nath Chakravarti

Mr. Bejoy Chandra Chatterjee (Bar-at-Law) and Mrs. Chatterjee

Prof. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee

Mrs. Sarala Devi Chaudhuri

Dr. Chang-lok Chen (Consul-General for China)

Mr. Chhogmal Choprah (Jain Svetambar Terapanthi Sabha)

Mr. G. G. Cleather (London)

Mr. Basil Crump (London)

Mr. J. C. Das (Bengal Central Bank)

Prof. Soroj Kumar Das

Principal Mrs. Tatini Das (Bethune College, Calcutta)

Principal S. N. Das Gupta

Swami Dayananda (Ramakrishna Mission Sisumangal Pratishthan, Calcutta)

Raja Kshitindra Deb Rai Mahasaya

Swami Desikananda (Mysore)

Monsieur Paul Dubois (Consul-General for France) and Madame Dubois.

Mr. Guru Saday Dutt, I.C.S. (Secretary, Local Self-Government Department, Government of Bengal)

Prof. and Mrs. Vicente Fatone, Buenos Aires (Argentina, South America)

Captain T. Forsyth

Mrs. T. Forsyth (Women's International Peace League)

Swami Ghanananda

Dr. D. P. Ghosh

Mr. Jyotish Chandra Ghosh

Comm. Baron Giuriati (Consul-General for Italy) and Signora Giuriati

Mr. Gothi (Jain Svetambar Terapanthi)

Dr. and Mrs. Heman Goetz (Leyden, Holland)

Madame Adelina del Carril de Guiraldes (Buenos Aires, Argentina, South America)

Mons. Jean Herbert (Paris)

Mr. M. K. Jacob

Mr. J. A. Joseph (Bombay)

Kaka Kalelkar (Wardha, C. P.)

Prof. Tulsidas Kar

Mrs. Amrit Kaur

Colonel and Mrs. Lindberg (U. S. A.)

Bhikkhu Kausalyayana (Sarnath, Benares)

Rao Bahadur Dr. Khāndelwal (Poona)

Major-General G. N. Lindsay (Commander of Bengal and Assam)

Mr. A. R. Lockhart

Dr. Dwarka Nath Mitter

Miss Josephine MacLeod, the "Tanteen" (Stratford on Avon, England)

Swami Madhavananda

Satyendra Nath Majumdar, *Ananda Bazar Patrika*

U. Maung Aye Maung (Rangoon)

Dr. G. H. Mees (Holland)

Prof. C. Narayana Menon (Benares Hindu University)

Kumar Hiranya Kumar Mitter

Mr. K. K. Mitter, Solicitor

Rai Bahadur Hrishikesh Mukherjee

Mr. Chandabhai Ali Muchhala (Bombay)

Sardar S. C. Mudaliar, Poona

Dr. Miss Mukta-Bai

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

Dr. Miss S. Pandit

Swami Paramananda, Boston and La Crescenta

Swami Pavitrananda

Count von Podewils (Consul-General for Germany) and
Countess von Podewils

Maulavi Zillur Rahman (Dacca)

Rao Bahadur C. Ramanujachariar (Madras)

Mrs. E. H. Rankin

Herr E. von Rath (Attache, German Consulate-General)

Principal Benjamin Richard (Victoria College, Mauritius)

Miss Ina May Riebe (Los Angeles, California, U. S. A.)

Mr. and Mrs. Rossetti (Y. M. C. A., Calcutta)

Kumar Narendra Nath Roy (of Bhagyakul, Dacca)

Dr. Nihar Ranjan Roy, (University Librarian, Calcutta)

Mr. and Mrs. C. H. M. Rustomjee

Swami Sambuddhananda

Swami Sankarananda

Sister Saraswati (Ramakrishna Medical Education Society)

Prof. and Mrs. Benoy Kumar Sarkar

- Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar (Hindusthan Co-operative Insurance Society)
 Prof. Benoy Chandra Sen
 Mr. Makhanlal Sen, (Manager, *Ananda Bazar Patrika*)
 Mrs. N. N. Sen Gupta
 Swami Sharvananda (Delhi and Karachi)
 Prof. and Mrs. Prabhu Dutt Shastri
 Swami Siddheswarananda (now in Paris).
 Sir Bejoy Prasad Singh-Roy (Minister, Bengal Government)
 Prof. Gurumukh Nihal Singh (Benares Hindu University)
 Sardar Jamait Singh
 Prof. K. P. Sipaimalani, Hindu University, Benares
 Mrs. L. P. Siympur (U. S. A.)
 Dr. H. V. Sonpar (Dev Samaj, Lahore)
 Swami Srivasananda (Bangalore)
 Sister Suchitra (Dacca)
 Swami Suddhananda (Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission)
 Dr. F. Tousek (Consul for Czechoslovakia) and Mrs. Tousek
 Dr. and Mrs. Amulya Ukil
 Brahmachari Devapriya Valisinha (Mahabodhi Society)
 Swami Vasudevananda
 Swami Vijayananda (Ramakrishna Ashram, Buenos Aires, Argentina, South America)
 Swami Virajananda (Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission)
 Swami Vireswarananda
 Swami Vishwananda (Bombay)
 Mr. & Mrs. D. N. Wadia
 Madame Sophia Wadia (Bombay)
 Captain Watson (Fort William)
 Madame Professor Helen de Willman-Grabowska (Kracow, Poland)
 Miss Hilda Yen (China)
 Sir Francis Younghusband (London)

II

Among those who regretted inability to attend some of the functions to which they were invited on account of unavoidable circumstances were:—

Swami Athedananda

Maharajadhiraja Bahadur Sir Bijay Chand Mahtab, of
Burdwan

Sir David and Lady Ezra

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi

Dr. Satya Churn Law (Sheriff of Calcutta)

Her Highness the Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mayurbhanj
(Orissa).

Sir Brajendra Lal and Lady Mitter

Mr. Amritlal Ojha

Sir Asoke Kumar Roy (Advocate-General).

Herr Edward von Selzam (Consul for Germany) and Frau
von Selzam.

CHAPTER II

GREETINGS FROM FAR AND NEAR

(a) GREETINGS FROM ABROAD

AFGHANISTAN

Dr. G. E. Monod-Herzen, Kabul

AUSTRALIA

Prof. S. Angus, St. Andrew's College, Sydney

Brahmachari Viveka Chaitanya, Sydney

AUSTRIA

Prof. A. Dopsch, University, Vienna

Prof. Othmar Spann, University, Vienna

BELGIUM

Dr. J. Leyder, Institut Solvay, Brussels, Magistrate of
Congo-Ubangi (Retd.)

CHINA

President T. C. Chin, Chung Shan University, Canton

Prof. Hu Shih, National University, Peiping.

President T. H. Lee, Fuh-tan University, Shanghai

President Lim Boon Keng, Amoy University, Amoy, Fukien

National Central Research Institute, Nanking

Prof. Tan Yun-Shan, Sino-Indian Cultural Society, Nanking

President Y. C. Tsai, Chinese Academy, Nanking

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Prof. I. A. Blaha, Masaryk University,

Editor, *Sociologiska Revue*, Brno

Prof. O. Stein, German University, Prague

Prof. M. Winternitz, German University, Prague

(since deceased)

EGYPT

His Eminence the Grand Sheikh Mohammad

Mustapha El Maraghy, Al-Azhar University, Cairo

Mustapha Fadel Bey, Author, Cairo

FRANCE

M. Alphonse de Chateaubriand, Paris

Miss M. Chovin, Toulouse

M. Jean Coutrot, Director, Humanisme Economique, Paris

Dr. J. E. Eliet, Paris

Prof. Paul Fauconnet, University, Paris

M. Jean Herbert, Paris

Prof. Emile Lasbax, University, Clermont-Ferrand,

Editor, *Revue Internationale de Sociologie*

Prof. Sylvain Levi, College de France, Paris (since deceased)

Prof. P. Masson-Oursel, University, Paris

Prof. Jean Przyluski, College de France, Paris

Prof. Louis Renou, Paris

Mons. Romain Rolland, Paris

Andre Varagnac, Comite de Folklore, Paris

GERMANY

Prof. Baron Cay von Brockdorff, University, Kiel

Prof. Eugen Fischer, University, Berlin

Prof. J. W. Hauer, University, Tuebingen

Count H. Keyserling, Darmstadt

Prof. H. Lueders, Permanent Secretary, Preussische

Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin

Prof. F. Meinecke, University, Berlin, Editor,

Historische Zeitschrift

Prof. Adolf Meyer, Hamburg

Prof. J. Plenge, University, Muenster

Prof. E. Spranger, Editor, *Die Erziehung*, University, Berlin

Dr. Franz Thierfelder, Deutsche Akademie, Munich

Prof. R. C. Thurnwald, University, Berlin

Dr. Reinhard Wagner, Berlin

Prof. Leopold von Wiese, University, Cologne

Prof. R. Wilbrandt, Technological University, Dresden

Swami Yatiswarananda, Wiesbaden, now in Switzerland
 President F. Zahn, Statistisches Landesamt, Munich
 Prof. E. Zenneke, Director, Deutsches Museum, Munich

GREAT BRITAIN

Swami Avyaktananda, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda
 Society, London
 Dr. Cyril Bailey, Oxford
 Mrs. C. M. Beach, Secretary, World Meditation
 Movement, Surrey
 A. Farquharson, Secretary, Institute of Sociology, London
 Mrs. Ruth Fry, Suffolk
 J. C. Maxwell Garnett, C.B.E., sc.D., Secretary, League of
 Nations Union, London
 Prof. A. C. Haddon, University, Cambridge
 Colonel D. U. F. Hoysted, Secretary, Royal
 Asiatic Society, London
 Prof. A. B. Keith, University, Edinburgh
 Miss Josephine MacLeod, Stratford-on-Avon
 Prof. L. A. Reid, University, Durham
 Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Pali Text Society, London
 Sir Michael Sadler, Chancellor, University, Oxford
 The Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert Samuel, President,
 British Institute of Philosophy, London
 Earl of Sandwich, London
 The School of Oriental Studies, London
 Prof. Gilbert Slater, Oxford
 Miss M. M. Sharples, Honorary Secretary, Society for Pro-
 moting the Study of Religions, London
 The Rt. Hon. Lord Snell, Chairman of the British
 Ethical Union, London
 John M. Watkins, London
 Herbert G. Wood, Director of Studies of
 Woodbrooke Settlement, Birmingham
 Sir Francis Younghusband, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., President,
 Royal Geographical Society, London ; Chairman,
 Society for promoting the Study of Religions, London
 Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India

HOLLAND

Dr. Hermann Goetz, Kern Institute, Leyden
I. Liefstinck, Secretary, Society of Friends, Amsterdam
Dr. Gulatherus H. Mees, Leyden
Prof. J. J. von Schmid, University, Leyden
A. Van Stalk, Scheveningen, Hague
Prof. S. R. Steinmetz, University, Amsterdam
Dr. J. Ph. Vogel, Kern Institute, Leyden

HUNGARY

Prof. Theo Suranyi-Unger, University, Szeged

IRAN

Shaik Abu Nasr Gilani, Gilan
Muhammad Hasan Kashani, Yezd
Muhammad Ali Shirazi, Shiraz

IRAQ

Yusuf Ahmad Bagdadi, Author, Bagdad

ITALY

Dr. M. Carelli, Rome
Prof. Mrs. Gisella Munira Craig, Rome
Rector Agostino Gemelli, Catholic University, Milan
Senator Giovanni Gentile, Rome
Mrs. Laura Gentile, Rome
Prof. Corrado Gini, University, Editor, *Metron*, Rome
Senator Achille Loria, Turin
Principe A. B. Ludovici, Rome (since deceased)
Prof. A. Niceforo, University, Rome
Prof. F. Orestano, University, Rome
President F. Savorgnan, Statistical Institute of the
Kingdom of Italy, Rome
Prof. G. Tucci, Vice-President, Istituto Italiano
per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, Rome
Prof. Giorgio del Vecchio, University, Editor, *Rivista
Internazionale di Filosofia del Diritto*, Rome

JAPAN

- S. Ando, General Secretary, Nippon Bunka Renmei
(Nippon Cultural Federation), Tokyo
Swami Khanse O Kochi, Buddhist Association, Kyoto
Kumamoto Buddhist Federation, Bukky Orengokai Kumamoto-shibu (Japanese Buddhists)
Gaku Matsumoto, Member, House of Peers, Tokyo
Prof. R. Nagai, Waseda University, Tokyo
Prof. Kitaro Nishida, University, Kyoto
Prof. Yone Noguchi, Keio University, Tokyo
President S. Shinjo, Imperial University, Kyoto
President S. Takata, Waseda University, Tokyo
Prof. J. Takakusu, Imperial University, Tokyo
Prof. H. Ui, Imperial University, Tokyo

JUGOSLAVIA

- Prof. J. M. Peritch, University, Belgrade

NORWAY

- Prof. Ewald Bosse, University, Oslo

THE PHILIPPINES

- Rt. Rev. F. Katada, Theomonistic Church, Dumaguete

POLAND

- Prof. J. K. Kochanowski, Warsaw
Prof. Stanislaw Schayer, Warsaw
Rector Wladyslaw Szafer, University, Krakow
Madame Prof. Helene de Willman-Grabowska,
University, Krakow

RUMANIA

- Prof. Traian Herseni, University, Bucharest
Prof. C. Narly, University, Editor, *Revista de Pedagogie*, Cernauti
Prof. G. Vladescu-Racossa, University, Bucharest

RUSSIA

Prof. T. Stcherbatski, Leningrad
Dr. A. Vostrikov, Leningrad

SPAIN

Prof. Viscount Santa Clara

SWITZERLAND

Prof. G. L. Duprat, University, Geneva, General Secretary,
International Federation of the Societies and Institutes
of Sociology (Paris and Geneva)
André de Maday, International Labour Office, Geneva
Prof. J. J. Mayer, Chur
Prof. W. E. Rappard, University, Geneva
Prof. Arnold Reymond, University, Lausanne
Romain Rolland, Villeneuve, Vaud
Dr. T. P. Sevensma, League of Nations, Geneva

SOUTH AFRICA

Miss Helen Mary Boulnois, Johannesburg

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS

Advocate Cheng Ean, Penang
Richard Sidney, Managing Editor, *The Roda*, Singapore

U. S. A.

Prof. Harry E. Barnes, New School for Social Science,
New York
Prof. Howard Becker, Smith College, Northampton,
Massachusetts
Prof. L. L. Bernard, Washington University,
St. Louis, Missouri
Swami Bodhananda, Vedanta Society, New York City
Prof. Charles S. Braden, North Western University,
Evanston, Illinois
Prof. F. Stuart Chapin, University, Minneapolis, Minnesota

- Prof. Gerhard Colm, New School for Social Research,
New York
- Prof. Maurice R. David, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
- Prof. Raphael Davison, Massachusetts
- Dr. R. Demos, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
- Prof. John Dewey, Columbia University, New York
- Prof. Franklin Edgerton, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
- Prof. Charles A. Ellwood, Duke University, North Carolina
- Rev. Frederick Bohn Fisher, Central Church, Methodist
Episcopal, Detroit (Michigan)
- Prof. Joseph K. Folsom, Vassar College,
Poughkeepsie, New York
- Prof. J. L. Gillin, University, Madison, Wisconsin
- Prof. F. H. Hankins, Editor, *American Sociological Review*,
Smith College, Northampton, Mass.
- Prof. William Ernest Hocking, Harvard University,
Cambridge, Mass.
- Rev. Dr. John Haynes Holmes, Community Church,
New York
- Prof. Ernest P. Horowitz, Hunter College, New York
- Prof. A. V. W. Jackson, Columbia University, New York
- Prof. Alvia Johnson, Social Research, New York
- Dr. George B. Lake, Editor, *Clinical Medicine and
Surgery*, Waukegan, Illinois
- Prof. C. E. Lively, University, Columbus, Ohio
- Prof. R. M. MacIver, Columbia University, New York
- Mr. Otto T. Mallery, Sugar Hill, N. H.
- Prof. M. T. McClure, University, Urbana, Illinois
- Prof. James B. Pratt, Williams College,
Williamstown, Massachusetts
- Prof. Stuart A. Rice, Central Statistical Board,
Washington, D. C.
- Prof. E. A. Ross, University, Madison, Wisconsin
- Prof. A. W. Ryder, University, Berkeley, California
- Prof. P. Sorokin, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
- Rev. Dr. J. T. Sunderland, New York (since deceased)
- President H. F. Swartz, Pacific School of Religion,
Berkeley, California

(b) GREETINGS FROM PROVINCES

J. N. Chakravorty, I.A.S., Shillong
The Hon'ble Rai Bahadur P. C. Dutta, C.I.E., Shillong
Rev. J. M. Nichols-Roy, ex-Minister,
Assam Government, Shillong
Prof. S. C. Sen-Gupta, M.A., Vice-Principal,
M. C. College, Sylhet

Sir John Anderson, Governor of Bengal
Principal R. Ahmed, Calcutta Dental College, Calcutta
Principal C. F. Ball, College, Bankura
Hon'ble Bejoy Kumar Basu, Calcutta
Sir Jagadis Chunder Bose, Calcutta (since deceased)
Sarat Chandra Bose, Bar-at-Law, Calcutta
Charu Chandra Biswas, Advocate, now Judge,
High Court, Calcutta
Lady Rachel Ezra, Calcutta
B. C. Ghose, Bar-at-Law, Calcutta
Atul Chandra Gupta, Advocate
A. K. Fuzlul Huq, M.L.A., ex-Mayor, Corporation,
now Chief Minister, Bengal, Calcutta
Jain Swetambar Terapanthi Sabha, Calcutta
Dr. Narendra Nath Law, Editor, *Indian Historical Quarterly*,
and President, " International Bengal " Institute,
Calcutta
Dr. Satya Churn Law, Sheriff, Calcutta
Dr. Ramesh Chandra Mazumdar, Vice-Chancellor,
University, Dacca
Syamaprasad Mukherjee, Vice-Chancellor, University,
Calcutta
A. F. Rahman, ex-Vice-Chancellor, University, Dacca

BIHAR

BOMBAY

R. M. Alpaiwalla, Bombay.
 Prof. N. K. Bhagwat, St. Xavier's College, Bombay
 V. N. Chandavarkar, Vice-Chancellor, University, Bombay
 Faredun K. Dadachandji, Solicitor, Bombay
 S. V. Dandekar, Sir Parashurambhau College, Poona,
 Bombay
 F. J. Ginwala, Solicitor, Bombay
 Swami Muralidharanandaji Giri, Mandaliswara,
 Panchavati, Nasik
 M. R. Jayakar, M.A., Bar-at-Law, Bombay,
 now Federal Judge
 N. C. Kelkar, Poona
 J. K. Mehta, Secretary, Indian Merchants' Association,
 Bombay
 K. Natarajan, Editor, *Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay
 Mrs. Beheram H. Pesikaka
 Jivatlal Purtapshi, Share-broker, Bombay
 V. P. Vaidya, J. P., Bar-at-Law, Bombay
 M. V. Venkateswara, Office-in-Charge, League of
 Nations (Indian Bureau), Bombay
 P. A. Wadia, Bombay

BURMA

The Hon. U. Chit Hlaing, President, Legislative Council,
Rangoon

U. Set, Vice-Chancellor, University, Rangoon

CENTRAL PROVINCES

M. S. Aney, M.L.A., Yeotmal

Mahatma Gandhi, Wardha

Dr. N. B. Khare, Nagpur, now Chief Minister

Dr. Sir Hari Singh Gour, Kt., Vice-Chancellor,
University, Nagpur

DELHI

Ghanasyamdas Birla, New Delhi

S. Chandra, Secretary, International Aryan League

Prof. Zakir Husain, Jamia Millia Islamia,
National Muslim University

MADRAS

Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Krishnaswami Iyer,
Advocate-General, Madras High Court

A. Chakravarty, Principal, Government College,
Kumbhakonam

N. Chandrasekhara Iyer, District and Sessions Judge, Madras

Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer, Madras

C. Rajagopalachari, now Premier, Madras

S. Satyamurti, M.L.A., Madras

C. R. Srinivasan, Editor, *The Swadesamitran*, Madras

C. Vijayaraghavachariar, ex-President, Indian
National Congress, Salem

MYSORE

Sir Mirza Ismail, The Dewan of Mysore

Prof. M. Hiriyanna, University, Mysore

V. Subrahmanya Iyer, Registrar of the Mysore University
(Retd.), Mysore

Prof. A. R. Wadia, University, Mysore

NIZAM'S DOMINIONS

His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad
Sir Akbar Hydari, Hyderabad

ORISSA

Dr. D. M. Ghosh, Civil Surgeon, Sambalpur
Pandit Akul Misra, Cuttack

THE PUNJAB

Abbasally Butt, Secretary, National Spiritual
Assembly of the Bahais of India and Burma
Sir Gokuldas Narang, Minister, Lahore

SIND

Principal N. B. Butani, D. J. Sind College, Karachi
Dr. Dhalla, Parsee Temple, Karachi
Rai Bahadur Jagatsingh A. Kundanani,
Retd. District Magistrate, Karachi

UNITED PROVINCES

B. L. Atreya, Hindu University, Benares
G. N. Gokhale, Theosophical Society, Benares
A. Madan Mohan Goswami, Bhaktisadan, Brindaban
Shivaprasad Gupta, Benares
Sri Swami Jayendra Puri, Mandaliswara, Benares
Dr. K. N. Katju, Advocate, Allahabad
Swami Krishnanandaji Giri, Mandaliswara,
Kankhal, Hardwar
Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Vice-Chancellor,
Hindu University, Benares
Dr. C. Narayana Menon, Hindu University, Benares
Rt. Hon'ble Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Allahabad
M. A. Sharij, Aligarh
Swami Swarupanandaji Giri, Mandaliswara, Benares

PART II

**SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY
PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS:
WELCOME AND RESPONSE**

CHAPTER III

ADDRESS BY CHAIRMAN, RECEPTION COMMITTEE

SIR MANMATHA NATH MUKHERJEE

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

More than two years ago when the scheme for celebrating the Birth Centenary of Paramahansa Sri Sri Ramakrishna Deva was first drawn up, it was considered the most essential part of the programme to convene a Parliament of the Religions of the World. This, as you all know, is quite in consonance with the spirit of the message of the great saint who was the "consummation of two thousand years of spiritual life of three hundred million people"—a great symphony "composed of the thousand voices and thousand faiths of mankind."

When in 1893 a Parliament of Religions was convened at the World's Fair in Chicago, its objects among other things were:

(1) to promote and deepen the spirit of human brotherhood among religious men of diverse faiths, through friendly conference and mutual good understanding, while not seeking to foster the temper of indifferentism, and not striving to achieve any formal and outward unity,

(2) to inquire what light each religion has afforded, or may afford, to the other religions of the world, and

(3) to bring the nations of the earth into a more friendly fellowship, in the hope of securing permanent international peace.

The purpose of the Parliament of Religions which was intended to be called in connection with the Centenary Celebrations, though much humbler, nevertheless embraced within its scope most of the aforesaid objects. Beneath the seeming diversities of different faiths there is a common plan and purpose—an underlying unity in search of which the whole of humanity, consciously or unconsciously, has been moving from time immemorial. The necessity

for providing a forum where exponents of all religious faiths of the world would be able to expound their own ideas and ideals without any spirit of intolerance, where they would be able to exchange their views on man's life and its goal and on problems furthering national amity, international fellowship and universal peace, can hardly be over-estimated. Though each religion is great in its own way, a comparison among religions with a view to establishing the superiority of one over the others, is unprofitable. There are many important truths that various religions teach in common, many that one has given to another, many again which in different religions have assumed different forms, sometimes apparently incongruous but not really so. Mutual exchange of views broadens the entire religious outlook and fosters a spirit of tolerance, the need for which is so often keenly felt. What is wanted in a true votary of any particular religion is intensity of belief together with a catholicity of outlook and non-aggressiveness. Sri Ramakrishna has said:

Religion, however, is one. It has been so from all times, it shall be so for ever.

The Lord is one, though He hath many names.

And yea, every belief, every religion, every system of faith and worship is but a path that leadeth unto Him.

It was thought that a Parliament of Religions was a necessary concomitant of the Celebrations, a *sine qua non*, without which no celebration of the Centenary would be perfect or complete. And there could be no more suitable place for the celebration of the Centenary than this where have assembled the representatives of the different religions of the world. Rightly did Swami Vivekananda say:¹ "Aye, long before ideas of universal religion and brotherly feeling between different sects had been mooted and discussed in any country in the world, here, in sight of this city, was living a man whose whole life was a Parliament of Religions, as it should be."

¹ In the course of his reply to Welcome Address at Calcutta, on February 28, 1897. See *Complete Works*, "Lectures from Colombo to Almora." (Advaita Ashram, Mayavati, Himalayas)—Ed.

The great Saint of Dakshineswar made himself conspicuous in the world's history of religious endeavour by actually practising different religions such as Hinduism, Islam and Christianity and realizing the grand truths embedded in them all. He was the first spiritual seer in the world who, standing on the bedrock of his own realizations, declared emphatically and unequivocally the great truth that the different religions are like so many paths leading to the same goal of God-realization. This was what Sri Ramakrishna lived to realize and proclaim to the sect-ridden world. It is, therefore, only meet that, on the occasion of the Birth Centenary of this glorious apostle of 'Harmony of Religions,' worthy representatives of various religions should have assembled here with the noble object of establishing a closer relationship of amity and goodwill among the different faiths and churches of the world.

The idea of this Parliament was formed, but we did not know how it would materialize. Our resources were limited and some of the difficulties that we saw seemed at the moment insurmountable. But there is a much higher and mightier power than that of man. We issued invitations to the most eminent persons all over the world—scholars, philosophers, indologists and religious heads. The world responded. From the response that we received, we found that we were to proceed. We did proceed, always anticipating with eager expectation the day when the Parliament of Religions would meet in this great city. And as time rolled on and the day came nearer and nearer, our eagerness was ever on the increase. That much longed-for day, that 'golden hour' has arrived: you have come, and on behalf of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee I bid you a most cordial welcome.

While rejoicing in the fact that our labours have ended in success, I must not forget to refer to those who were with us in our endeavours and whom we miss here tonight. The great Leveller has weakened our rank by taking a ruthless toll. Only a few days ago, just on the eve of the concluding part of the celebrations in Calcutta, Swami Akhandananda, a direct disciple of the Master, who was President of the Ramakrishna Math and

Mission and of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations Committee, passed away. The presence of our veteran leader was a source of inspiration to us. The world heard last year about this time his inspiring message of peace and goodwill that was broadcast through the radio to the farthest corners of the globe. Prof. Dr. Winternitz, the celebrated scholar and indologist of Czechoslovakia, who was our co-worker and whose learned paper on *Race and Religion* will shortly be read at this Parliament, is also no more in this land of the living. We also express our deep sense of sorrow at the deaths of Prof. Sylvain Levi (France), Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari, Kt. (Calcutta), Mr. S. W. Dassenaik, C.I.E. (Ceylon), Mr. A. C. Chatterjee (Geneva), Prince Andrea Boncompagni Ludovisi (Italy), Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukerjee (U. S. A.), Dr. J. T. Sunderland (U. S. A.), Sir Lalubhai Samaldas (Bombay) and Swami Dhirananda (Belur Math), all of whom were actively associated with this Centenary.

On behalf of the Centenary Committee, I welcome you all who have made immense personal sacrifice to come over here and give us the benefit of your wisdom. I also thank those who have warmly responded to our invitation but could not accept it on account of their preoccupations.

May I take this opportunity to tell you that the Centenary was observed not only in the different provinces of India, in Burma, Ceylon, Federated Malay States, Straits Settlements, Japan and China, but also in many parts of England and the Continent, North and South America, Africa and Australia. Since the inauguration of the Centenary at the Belur Math on the 24th February, 1936, celebrations have been held in hundreds of cities and villages all over India, Burma and Ceylon. The high and the low, the rich and the poor, one and all, without any distinction of caste, creed or colour, participated in these celebrations, the most prominent features of which were public meetings, students' gatherings, ladies' conferences, distribution of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature,¹ organization of literary and athletic competitions and feeding of the poor. Religious

¹ In India and Burma this was printed in all the principal vernaculars as well as in English.—ED.

Conventions also formed another important feature of the celebrations in many cities and towns.

Leaders of thought from all parts of the world such as Japan, China, Philippines, Straits Settlements, Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Austria, Hungary, Germany, Russia, Poland, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, France, Italy, Great Britain, Norway, Egypt, South Africa and U. S. A. have sent us greetings and congratulations.

In India we have received messages of good wishes from prominent persons representing all walks of life belonging to Assam, Bengal, Bihar, U. P., Delhi, the Punjab, Sind, Bombay, C. P., Nizam's Dominions, Madras, Mysore, Ceylon, Orissa and Burma. We take this opportunity of conveying our grateful thanks to one and all for their cordial felicitations.

We are painfully conscious of our shortcomings in not being able to look adequately to your needs and comforts as we should. But we have every reason to hope that through your kind co-operation this Parliament of Religions will be a complete success. May God bless our endeavour and grant us the necessary strength and vision to realize through this meeting of the world's representatives of religions the lofty ideal of the federation of faiths for which this Parliament has been convened.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before I conclude I once more bid you a most hearty welcome on behalf of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee.

CHAPTER IV

GREETINGS FROM DELEGATES

The delegates who conveyed to the meeting greetings from their respective countries and communities included: Mr. Ngak-Chhen Rinpoche, Prime Minister to the Tashi Lama (Tibet); Professor Tan Yun-Shan (China); Dr. Peter Boike (U. S. A.); Madame Professor Helene de Willman-Glabowska (Poland); Dr. H. Goetz (Holland); Mr. Yusuf Ahmad Bagdadi (Iraq); Miss Helen Mary Boulnois (South Africa); Mr. Maung Aye Maung (Burma); Mr. J. A. Joseph (Bombay); Dr. R. Ahmed (Moslems of Bengal); Professor Tulsidas Kar (Theosophical Society, Calcutta); Sir Francis Younghusband (London); Mr. D. N. Wadia (the Parsee Community); Sardar Jamait Singh (Sikhs); Dr. Sonpar (Dev Samaj, Lahore); Swami Virajananda (Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Belur, Calcutta); Mr. Devapriya Valisinha (Mahabodhi Society, Calcutta); Swami Paramananda (Vedanta Centre, Boston, U. S. A.); Mr. S. Aiman (General Secretary, Calcutta, National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations in India, Burma and Ceylon); and Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar (International Federation of the Societies and Institutes of Sociology, Paris and Geneva).

The greetings are given below in the order in which they were conveyed to the Parliament.

THE SIKHS OF INDIA

SARDAR JAMAIT SINGH as representative of the Sikh Community said:

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Today on this historic and most sacred occasion, it is the proudest privilege of my life to convey to you all, the greetings of forty lakhs of the bravest and noblest Sikhs and the sons of the immortal Guru Nanak. Today we have come not to speak on the different phases of our religion, but to convey to you

greetings from our fellow-people. Had Sri Ramakrishna, whom we claim as the prophet of the last century, not been born, I can say that there would have been no such gathering today of people representing all the important religions of the world. We all bow to this great man who has brought all the different religions on one platform. India as well as the world is torn asunder by the conflicts which we have in our different religions. But it is my conviction that if we just practise in our lives the chief teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, many of the conflicts prevailing on earth will disappear. Let me conclude with a word about the teachings of our great Gurus, which inculcate in one and all of us the service of our motherland. The greatest teaching of our great Guru was self-sacrifice for our country, self-sacrifice for our religion, self-sacrifice for our women, self-sacrifice for the noblest things in the world. It is self-sacrifice that takes us to *moksha* (salvation), to *mukti* (liberation). That is also the message which Guru Govind Singh gave us, and I have the privilege of communicating it to this historic assembly tonight.

THE MAHABODHI SOCIETY OF INDIA

As delegate from the Mahabodhi Society of India, MR. DEVAPRIYA VALISINHA, Secretary of the Society, said:

MR. CHAIRMAN, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

On this historic occasion, I stand here to convey the greetings and good wishes of the Mahabodhi Society of India for the success of this Parliament of Religions organized on the occasion of the Centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna. Though the number of Buddhists in India is not very large, we are still proud to claim that no less than one-fourth of the entire human race finds spiritual satisfaction in our great faith. Such countries as Burma, Ceylon, Siam, China, Japan, Korea and Mongolia are almost entirely devoted to the Buddha, whose teachings of compassion, freedom and self-development have brought about quite a wonderful transformation in the lives of the people in those countries. The organizers of this International Parliament ought to be congratulated on giving us an opportunity of coming

into contact with so many different faiths on one platform. May this historic meeting help us to understand one another better and work together in unison for the peace and happiness of all human beings.

DEV SAMAJ, LAHORE

DR. H. V. SONPAR, as representative of the Dev Samaj, Lahore, said:

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have great pleasure in offering you the heartiest greetings from the Dev Samaj, Lahore. Dev Samaj is a religious society which stands for the harmonising of all the human and sub-human cosmic relations on the basis of evolution in Nature. The plan is to evolve higher consciousness in human souls, by which they can recognize the due rights of others and also feel that all the powers and possessions that they have are a mere trust with them for their own evolution and the evolution of others. This higher consciousness can help to put a stop to the reign of the destructive lower loves and lower hates which have created a living hell on this earth.

In conclusion I pray that my Lord Bhagavan Deva Atma may bestow His unique *deva prabhāvas* (highest psychic influences) to guide the deliberations of this Parliament of Religions.

ARYA SAMAJ OF INDIA

PUNDIT VIDYANANDAJI VEDALANKAR, who represented the Arya Samaj of India, said:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The word 'religion' is defined, understood, preached and practised in different ways these days. To all appearances it is different with different people and in different climes. It was never so in ancient times. Religion was common and universal for all mankind to whatever country or time they might belong. Throughout our Vedic literature down to the Upanishadic period we never find *dharma* associated with personal names. The

Vedas preached and taught universal religion. God created the whole universe and along with it mankind and every living being. In the very nature of things it must be recognised that that governing authority must have laid down rules of conduct of life for the benefit and guidance of humanity at large and it must be universal too. Our ancient Rishis, therefore, regard the *Vedas*, which may be described as the first book of the world, as the fountain-head of religion—" *Vedo'khilo dharma-mūlam.*" And these *Vedas* teach—

" *Īśāvāsyamidam sarvam,*" etc., i.e.

" Whatever is subject to change in this universe, should all be covered by the Lord. By that renunciation (of the world) support thy inner self; covet not the wealth of others,"

and "*Mitrasya chakshushāḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni samikshāmahe,*" i.e.

" We look upon all created beings with the eye of a friend."

Such simple, sound and universal teachings were given to all mankind in ancient days and they still form the fundamental and basic principles of all the modern religions. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva realized this fundamental truth in his practical life and found out that the essentials are the same everywhere. This great saint taught both by practice and by precept these simple but grand universal truths in his own impressive and charming way. He tried to bring all the modern faiths thereby as near to one another as possible. It is in the fitness of things that in this august body, the learned representatives of all great religions are gathered together to do honour to the name and glory of such a saint who transcends the limit of caste, creed and colour in his teachings and whose very life serves as a beacon light to the present-day distracted and disrupted humanity.

This Parliament will serve its purpose if only it could lay sufficient emphasis on this aspect of essential unity of all the faiths and narrow down all the points of differences. Much of the present-day conflict, war and antagonism will disappear, if we realise that we all are the sons of the same immortal Father

(*sarve amritasya putrāḥ*) and follow the Commandments of universal brotherhood of men, fatherhood of God and rules of Conduct as laid down by Him as described above. In this hope, sisters and brothers of all Faiths, I convey to you the hearty greetings of the Arya Samaj, which I represent to-day, and welcome you to this city to commemorate in a practical manner the memory of the great Paramahansa Deva Ramakrishna whose mission in life was to find out unity in diversity and preach all-embracing love toward man and all living beings. *Om Śāntih!*

THE JAINS OF INDIA

As delegate from the Jain Svetambar Terapanthi Sabha of the Jain Community MR. CHHOGMAL CHOPRA said:

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

On behalf of the Jains as well as on behalf of Jainism, a religion which has existed from time immemorial, I greet you all, who have come from far and near at the call of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee. The teachings of Sri Ramakrishna have something in common with the teachings of the Jain religion. The main topic which centres round the Jain religion, is expressed in the words, *ahimsā paramo dharma*. And the giving up of possession and lust was the main teaching imparted by Sri Ramakrishna also. There is thus a common bond uniting the Jains and the devotees of Ramakrishna.

THE PARSEES OF INDIA

As representative of the Indian Parsees MR. D. N. WADIA, Superintendent, Geological Survey of India, said:

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I consider it a great privilege to welcome on behalf of the Parsee Community the delegates to the Parliament of Religions. Only a small colony of Parsees in this city represents the ancient faith of Zoroaster. Though small in number, the Parsees of Calcutta give their cordial greetings to you here and wish success to the deliberations of this important and august body.

BENGAL THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

As delegate from the Theosophical Society **PROF. TULSIDAS KAR** of the Calcutta Medical College, said:

MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS,

On behalf of the members of the Bengal Theosophical Society, as also on behalf of the Theosophical Societies in all India, I convey most cordially the fraternal greetings to the representatives of the different religions assembled in this Parliament. This Parliament, as you all know, is convened on the occasion of the Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna. And we, the members of the Theosophical Society stand for the fraternity of faiths. Co-operation between all religions is the main tenet of Theosophy. Our response to this invitation and our cordial greetings to the delegates and representatives of the different religions are, therefore, spontaneous and most cordial. The Theosophical Society represents a world movement just as the Ramakrishna Mission, and we have branches all over the world. We believe in at least one of the most important teachings of Ramakrishna, which has been mentioned by the Chairman of the Reception Committee in his speech, viz.: "Religion, however, is one. It has been so from all times, and it shall be so forever." We claim within our fold members and representatives of all faiths in the world. And we have amongst us Christians, Moslems, Jains, Buddhists, Hindus, and so on, and therefore it is in the fitness of things that I extend to you our most cordial and hearty welcome. This is not really the occasion for explaining the peculiarity of Theosophy and the purpose for which the Theosophical Society stands. But I may just inform this distinguished audience that the main object of Theosophy is to bring about an amity amongst the followers of different religions and to bring about the fraternity of faiths.

THE MUSLIMS OF BENGAL

Conveying greetings to the Parliament on behalf of the Muslims of Bengal, **DR. R. AHMED** said:

I bring to this Assembly greetings from the followers of

Islam in Bengal. Islam has always prided itself on its spirit of toleration and brotherhood. It is fitting that on the occasion of the Centenary Celebrations of the prophet of religious harmony, the followers of all different religions should meet together. The teachings of Ramakrishna have distinctly affected the lives of the Muslims of Bengal in various ways. The holding of this Parliament of Religions will cement the friendship between the followers of different religions. Devout Muslims realize that the fundamentals of all religions are one, though they may be clothed in various garbs. It is in keeping with the spirit of the times that this Parliament is being held when the world is groping for a synthesis of all religions and cultures. May this Parliament of Religions bring such a day nearer is the wish of all devout followers of Islam!

RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION

On behalf of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, SWAMI VIRAJANANDA, Secretary, sent the following message:

The presence of the representatives of the different religions of the world in this august assembly reminds us of the historic sittings of the Parliament of Religions held more than forty years back in the World's Fair at Chicago, when Swami Vivekananda, the great apostle of Hinduism, took the world by storm by proclaiming unto humanity the universal message of the harmony of faiths received as a spiritual legacy from his great Master, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. The enthusiasm with which the message was hailed was an unmistakable indication of the growing aspiration of mankind for genuine peace as also of the loving homage paid to the mystic wisdom of the saints and sages of India, so splendidly realized in the life of the Saint of Dakshineswar. The message travelled from land to land, from race to race, and our heart throbs with delight to find that within a short period of time the leading savants of the modern world, realizing the need of the hour as also the greatness of the message, have congregated once again to sing the immortal song of spiritual freedom and usher in a new era of peace and goodwill through mutual understanding and religious concord.

It is indeed a happy sign of the times that at this critical juncture when the blind forces of materialism are threatening to undermine the solidarity of human life and culture, this Parliament of Religions is being held to give an opportunity to the exponents of various systems of thought to understand one another and establish a fellowship of faiths on a basis of mutual love and toleration. We wish the Parliament all success and sincerely believe that the spirit of comradeship which has brought under one canopy the leaders of different faiths from the distant parts of the earth will bind us all into a spiritual fraternity. We fervently pray that this spirit of love may grow evermore in strength and volume and silence once for all the jarring notes of clash and conflict in the modern world.

May Sri Ramakrishna, in whose name this Parliament is being held, give us adequate power to realize the significance of his message and carry the wealth of his spiritual wisdom from door to door and thereby help in the establishment of peace in the collective life of humanity. May his blessings be upon you all for ever and ever!

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN
ASSOCIATIONS, INDIA, BURMA AND CEYLON**

As General Secretary of the National Council of Y. M. C. A's in India, Burma and Ceylon, S. AIMAN said:

May this great gathering of yours be the means of bringing to one and all an increase of that real religious passion which will give ability to go forward in strength to seek and to serve the various needs of humanity. We are with you in all your deliberations. May God bless your gathering!

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

MR. J. A. JOSEPH, Bombay, on behalf of the Jews of India, said:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I wish and pray for the success of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations and the Parliament of Religions.

THE BUDDHISTS OF BURMA

As representative of the Buddhists of Burma MR. MAUNG AYE MAUNG of Rangoon, said:

MR. CHAIRMAN, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

Historically speaking, Burma is still young. With all the vigour of youth she sends her greetings through me, who perhaps happen to be the youngest delegate to this Parliament of Religions. She optimistically hopes to contribute to the freedom, peace and progress of mankind through Buddhism which she has inherited from this great country.

TIBET

MR. NGAK-CHHEN RINPOCHE, Prime Minister to the Tashi Lama (who is at present in Eastern Tibet) said in Tibetan (interpreted by his Secretary Mr. T. C. Bernard):

It has afforded me a great pleasure to be present at this World Congress of Faiths. I bring good wishes to this Congress from all the Buddhists under Tashi Lama of Tibet. I heartily wish it all success in its universal call to bring peace and goodwill and happiness to mankind. I offer my blessings to the World Congress of Faiths on this auspicious occasion of the celebrations of the Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, one of the greatest spiritual geniuses of India.

CHINA

PROF. TAN YUN-SHAN of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society (Nanking) and National Research Institute (Nanking) said:

PRESIDENT, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

Today I am here as a representative of China. I feel extremely happy and have much pleasure in accepting your kind invitation which was extended to us. I sincerely offer you on behalf of myself as well as on behalf of my country and its five

hundred million people our sincere wishes for the success of this Parliament.

IRAN

SHAIK ABU NASR GILANI of Gilan on behalf of the people of Iran said:

The foundations of all religions are one and the same. The founders of all the religious systems of the world had and still have this point in view and preach to the people this laudable and praiseworthy fundamental principle underlying every religion.

Therefore, the foundations of all religions are one, but structures only are differently made.

Sri Ramakrishna had taught this very principle to the world and all his endeavour had been to bring about a unity in all the religious systems of the world. It is, therefore, incumbent on every human being, of whatever creed he may be, to pray for his soul and to endeavour to establish permanently all the good works done by him for humanity.

IRAQ

MR. YUSUF AHMED BAGDADI on behalf of the Mussulmans of Iraq conveyed his best wishes to the Ramakrishna Mission and the Centenary Celebrations. Ramakrishna, he said, was the last prophet in the world to preach a cosmopolitan religion.

ENGLAND

SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND said:

MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS,

I come from London on behalf of the World Congress of Faiths and the Society for the Study of Religions, and I convey to you their very sincere congratulations and I hope for the great success of this meeting. I need hardly say with what delight I personally come here once more to the land of my birth and with what great interest I am looking forward to the proceedings of

your great Congress. For many years past I have had the profoundest admiration for that great Saint whose Centenary is being celebrated now, and on behalf of the World Congress of Faiths. I have the honour to present to you the Proceedings of our World Congress of Faiths which was held in London last summer and which will be held again this July at Oxford. This book arrived only two hours before I left London. I do wish your Congress every possible success and it is with great delight that I listen to your proceedings.

KERN INSTITUTE, LEYDEN (HOLLAND)

As delegate from Kern Institute of Leyden DR. HERMANN GOETZ said:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

As a representative of the Kern Institute of Leyden, Holland, I feel it a great honour to address you who have come from all ends of the civilized world to meet in discussion of religious problems. Holland is a small country, but since olden days it has had relations with other countries throughout the world, and it is one of the first countries to study the East and India. It has been the centre of religious liberty, and even at the present day a deeper religious sentiment finds expression in this small country than elsewhere. The Kern Institute has made it a special task to collect and spread the knowledge of the wisdom of the East and also the knowledge of the cultural and religious movements of India. Therefore I feel it a special privilege to collaborate in the work of this International Parliament of Religions. Mutual understanding of peoples has become one of the most important tasks for humanity at the present moment and the understanding of the moral basis of mankind is perhaps the centre of all this. I am proud to be with you all in this Assembly which has come together under the name of one of the greatest saints of humanity, Sri Ramakrishna, whose teachings have brought all mankind into a homogeneous order, into one people, and this is what is expected of all religions.

OHIO, U. S. A.

DR. PETER BOIKE of Cincinnati, Ohio, on behalf of the Americans said:

I thank you on this greatest occasion in my life for this blessed privilege of being here to bring to you the message and love from the people of America, your brothers and sisters there. It is one of the greatest pleasures of my life to come in contact with the brother followers of Sri Ramakrishna whose blessed memory we all revere this evening.

KRAKOW UNIVERSITY (POLAND)

MADAME PROF. HELENE DE WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA on behalf of the Krakow University (Poland) said:

I thank you for your very kind invitation to this Parliament of Religions. Our University is the oldest University in Poland and one of the oldest in Europe. We take pride in sharing your joys and sorrows, and we believe in helping one another to bring about a closer relation and friendship between nations, and the University sends best wishes and greetings to the Parliament of Religions.

VEDANTA CENTRE, BOSTON, MASS. (U. S. A.)

SWAMI PARAMANANDA said as follows:

I am bringing a message, first of all, from the United States of America. As I was to come here to take part in this great and august assembly, the American people requested me to convey their message just in the same way as the great Swami Vivekananda carried the message of India to U. S. A.

I have brought a message of love and unity, and I believe that this message will serve to build a bridge over the hiatus that stands between man and man. Sri Ramakrishna's life was a living Parliament of Religions. It was and it is a symphony of all idealism and spirituality.

Sri Ramakrishna, through his life and example, has demonstrated that universal religion is not a dream and a possibility,

but is a practicable reality. Today we must realize that because of the great Spirit that stands behind us, because of his benediction and blessing upon us, we are gathered here today. May that Infinite One who resides in all hearts bring success to this great assembly!

SOUTH AFRICA

MISS HELEN MARY BOULNOIS said:

It is my most proud privilege today to speak to you and to bring you the greetings from your fellow-countrymen—Indians in South Africa. It is hard for you to realize here in your own great land the hunger of their hearts, the hope and love they all cherish for the country which so many of them have never seen. They think of you and they think of this country.

The burning question today is this: Can we inherit the great tradition of our forefathers, can we fulfil their daily blessings, can we have the daily realization of the presence of the Lord within us in the hurry and bustle of actual life? The answer is, yes. If every day and night, or just a few minutes, we pray, with the intensity of the whole dynamic life within, to the one single and Infinite Source, we shall be able to realize the ideal of our forefathers. Gentlemen, this is their message to you. I know that I can take from every one here before me a similar message to them. I thank you.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA SOCIETY, CALCUTTA

SWAMI ABHEDANANDA, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and the President of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, welcomed all the delegates from far and near in the name of Sri Ramakrishna and in the name of his world-renowned disciple Swami Vivekananda and offered his greetings to them. "Ramakrishna," said he, "is the consummation of all the prophets, seers and incarnations of divinity that came before him. This is a great opportunity for promoting fellowship among the various faiths and I hope that this Parliament of Religions will deal a death-blow to all communal strife and struggle."

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE SOCIETIES
AND INSTITUTES OF SOCIOLOGY

(Paris and Geneva)

As delegate of the above Federation PROF. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR of the Calcutta University said:

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The International Federation of the Societies and Institutes of Sociology which has its headquarters in Paris and Geneva is not a religious association. The business of the members of this Federation is to study, among other things, religion,—religion as art, religion as profession, and religion as science. The oldest member of this Federation, the International Institute of Sociology, is about forty-four years old, and everybody who has done anything in the domain of modern sociology has been a member of one or other national institution of this Federation. About a dozen members of this International Federation have been actively co-operating with the Ramakrishna Centenary Committee as well as this International Parliament of Religions not only with messages and greetings but also with valuable contributions.

On account of contacts with socio-religious and philosophical thought in Eur-America it is possible for me to observe that Ramakrishna today is not a subject-matter of studies that are exclusively of Indian importance. Ramakrishna has steadily been growing into a topic of researches and investigations by the intellectuals of East and West. And the Ramakrishna Mission, which is the product of Ramakrishna multiplied by Vivekananda, is also becoming one of the most interesting as well as instructive themes of philosophical research by the academicians of the two hemispheres.

I have been authorized by Prof. Duprat of Geneva, the General Secretary of the Federation, to communicate to this gathering the best wishes and sympathies of the academicians of Europe and America, indeed, in a sense, of the intellectuals of the entire world. As they are immensely interested in 'social equilibrium' they are looking forward to this International Parliament of Religions at Calcutta as one of the most important

land-marks in the construction of a common bridge with which a great structure of world peace is being established in the world. The proceedings of this Parliament will be watched with great care by some five hundred anthropologists, psychologists, religious thinkers, moral philosophers and sociologists who are members of this Federation.

The Ramakrishna Mission today is a world force. With its branches and sub-branches this Mission constitutes a new empire of the Indian people. The present Parliament will be appraised by the world's philosophers and other intellectuals as one of the greatest achievements of this new Indian Empire of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER V

MESSAGES

Leaders of thought from all parts of the world such as Japan, China, the Philippines, the Straits Settlements, Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Austria, Hungary, Germany, Russia, Poland, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, France, Italy, Great Britain, Norway, Egypt, South Africa, and the United States of America sent their greetings. In India messages of good wishes were received from persons representing all walks of life and belonging to Assam, Bengal, Bihar, the United Provinces, Delhi, the Punjab, Sind, Bombay, the Central Provinces, Nizam's Dominions, Madras, Mysore, Ceylon, Orissa and Burma. The texts of forty-eight of these messages are given below in the order in which they were read out or reported at the various sessions of the Parliament.

I. LORD ZETLAND

Secretary of State for India

I desire to convey to you my cordial good wishes for a very successful gathering of the representatives of the various religious faiths which is to be held under your Chairmanship. I still carry with me vivid and happy memories of my contacts with office-bearers and members of the Ramakrishna Mission during the period of my sojourn in Bengal, and I feel sure that the fact that the gathering is being held under the auspices of the Mission is in itself a guarantee of its success. It would give me great pleasure to be present if that were possible so that I might meet once again my many friends who will be there. But since this is not possible, I shall at least be with you in spirit.

2. SIR JOHN ANDERSON

Governor of Bengal

It is with much interest that I have learnt of the calling of the Parliament of Religions in Calcutta in honour of the Centenary

of Sri Ramakrishna, and I trust that the discussions of the delegates may further the causes which Sri Ramakrishna had at heart—religious harmony, social toleration and inter-racial concord.

3. MAHATMA GANDHI

Wish Parliament success. Wish it could do some constructive work (Telegram).

4. HIS EXALTED HIGHNESS THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD

On the occasion of the Centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna I send you a message of encouragement and of sympathy with the liberal and enlightened views of which he was so able an exponent. A wide toleration of all religions and sects is the spirit which your Parliament of Religions is endeavouring to spread and there could be no greater contribution to peace and goodwill among men (Telegram).

5. KUMAMOTO BUDDHIST FEDERATION, BUKKY ORENGOKAI KUMAMOTOSHIBU

Japanese Buddhists offer greetings ; wish Parliament of Religions success (Cable).

6. BARON PROF. CAY VON BROCKDORF

*University, Kiel (Germany), President of the Societas
Hobbesiana in Germany*

You are doing great things for mankind and you help all men of any religious feeling in the best form and with the most important ideas a thinker may point out. So, we must admire your work and praise your very valuable intentions. Though India is the dream of my own youth, and the Indians the love of my fancy, I cannot follow your suggestions and make use of so delicious an invitation as yours.

7. PROF. VISCOUNT SANTA CLARA OF SPAIN

The subject to which I have devoted my best thoughts during the best part of my worldly life is friendly advice to a small

number of persons actually following a spiritual path, such as earnest Yogis, Sufis, Parsees, Christians, etc. That work is entirely independent of my task as university teacher, and has always been private. Therefore papers, articles and other publications do not normally come within its scope. However, I can offer to public investigation two recurring facts chosen out of my experience, and related to the conciliatory sentence, confirmed by the existence of the Parliament of Religions, "Every faith is a path to God."

The first fact is that the devout human worshipper resides habitually in the standpoint of plurality and mankind, and necessarily collates the Deity or the Absolute with the relative, as if one were many, and as if the Absolute, becoming relative, constituted the content of one faith out of many faiths ; but, in this collation, the Deity only remains vitally such for the worshipper inasmuch as It is the content of his one faith, core of his own faithfulness.

The second fact is that the devout human worshippers, when they are conversing privately with a spiritual guide or engaged in a fairly deep meditation, or when they find themselves in critical circumstances such as the approach of death, recede from the standpoint of relativity, in which one public faith exists together with other faiths, and try to rise to the proximity of the absolute or transcendent object of their minds, where all comparison with the relative is eluded. In such moments of inwardness, the worshipper's eventual tolerance remains more or less foreign to his conscience, as do the attitudes which he occasionally adopts for social purposes.

The two aforesaid facts recur with regard to human worshippers, but in the mind of sages there is undoubtedly a living principle of harmony between the two principles of identity and contradiction which are responsible for both the standpoints above described that manifest the exclusiveness which ascends towards the unity, the Absolute or the Deity, and the tolerance which descends towards relativity, and I believe that it is this harmony which originally inspired the present meeting of 'Men of goodwill.'

Drawing a practical conclusion from what I have said, I can assert that a man should first of all try to become a sage, if he is well prepared for that by vocation and study, and afterwards he may realize the lovable sense in which "Every faith is a path to God."

8. PROF. WILLIAM ERNEST HOCKING

Harvard University, Cambridge (Massachusetts), U. S. A.

I very much deplore the circumstances which have prevented me from taking a more active part in the Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, to whose shrine at Belur I had the honour of making a pilgrimage in the autumn of 1931. Having heard as a youth Swami Vivekananda speak at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893, I have retained through many years lively interest in the Ramakrishna movement both in India and abroad. It is the 'lengthened shadow' of a great man. It aids powerfully in that slow and vital work of self-consciousness whereby the human spirit learns the eternal meaning of its own concrete traditions, its daily life, its aspirations; and finding its centre of absolute stability is nevertheless not alienated from effective participation in the historic labour of race and nation.

I allow myself to express at this time my deep appreciation of the honour you have done me in inviting me to take part, to congratulate you on the success and the world-wide interest which the celebration has so far attained, and to wish for your further efforts the highest achievement.

9. MONS. ROMAIN ROLLAND

Villeneuve (Switzerland)

The following is an extract from Monsieur Romain Rolland's letter, dated Villeneuve (Vaud), Switzerland, Villa Olga, the 25th December, 1936:

(Original in French)

Ma très mauvaise santé me rend impossible le voyage aux Indes, et je ne pourrai, à mon grand regret, assister au Parlement des Religions à Calcutta.

Vous ne doutez pas que ma pensée ne soit présente parmi vous. Je vous prie de vouloir bien transmettre au Parlement mon fraternel salut de sympathie et de respect. Nul plus que moi n'aspiré, toute sa vie, à réconcilier et à allier entre elles toutes les grandes forces de l'âme humaine, les énergies de foi en la Vie universelle et d'amour agissant pour tous les hommes. Je suis heureux qu'une telle Assemblée d'union mondiale ait été placée sous l'invocation du Maître de l'Amour pour tous les êtres vivants, notre cher Sri Ramakrishna.

Permettez-moi seulement d'engager tous les participants au Parlement à orienter toujours davantage leurs efforts vers le service social, vers l'aide aux masses de la terre. Nous sommes à une heure de l'histoire du monde, où les peuples, depuis tant de siècles, opprimés et sacrifiés, s'organisent pour leur défense contre une exploitation qui se fait toujours plus asservissante et plus cruelle. Aidons à l'avènement de la justice sociale! Notre place doit être toujours auprès des pauvres et des humbles, de ceux qui travaillent et qui peinent.

(English Rendering)

The very bad condition of my health prevents me from undertaking the voyage to India, and very regrettably enough it is not possible for me to be present at the Parliament of Religions.

You do not doubt that my thought is present in your midst: I request you to be kind enough to communicate to the Parliament my fraternal greetings of sympathy and respect. Nobody has aspired more than myself during the entire lifetime to reconcile and unite among themselves all the great forces of the human spirit, the energies of faith in the universal life and of love working for all mankind. I am happy that such an assembly of world-unity has been placed under the invocation of the Master of love for all living beings, our dear Sri Ramakrishna.

Allow me simply to request all the participants at the Parliament to always direct their efforts towards social service, towards the aid of the masses of the world. We find ourselves at a point in the history of the world when the peoples, oppressed and sacrificed as they have been, for a number of centuries, are

organising themselves for their defence against an exploitation which is becoming more and more humiliating and cruel. May we help forward the coming of social justice! Our place ought always to be beside the poor and the humble, those who labour and perish.

10. PROF. J. J. VON SCHMID

University, Leyden (Holland)

The reading of the principles of the Congress and the religious and philosophical trend expressed in the invitation gave me once more a very high idea of Indian thought. This thought is, I think, in its universal ideas of fraternity, morality and ethics and general wisdom, the best and the deepest in the whole world, and therefore an example for all countries and parts of the world. I am sure if this spirit governed the world, it would be much better through it. Therefore, all my good wishes are for the Congress and its members. May a high spirit and noble thoughts guide it and may it be a fountain for better social ideas and relations everywhere!

11. PROF. M. UI

Imperial University, Tokyo

We wish you success in the Parliament of Religions called by you as a part of the celebrations of the first Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna. As Sri Ramakrishna is one of the most distinguished religious men ever born in India and was, in his time, a prophet of world-wide fame and influence, we hope that he still remains even in the present time a prophet, and his teachings should be propagated by the efforts of his fellow countrymen.

12. PROF. LOUIS RENOU

Paris

(Translated from the original in French)

No initiative is more praiseworthy than yours at a moment specially when materialism and barbarity are menacing to submerge all that human culture has produced.

13. MR. A. VAN STALK

Scheveningen, Hague (Holland)

Sri Ramakrishna is for me one of the Prophets of the new age, whose books I have read and whom I greatly admire and respect. The harmony of faiths, religious toleration and inter-racial amity are also amongst the objects of the Sufi Movement in the West, so that the work you are doing to promote these interests has my fullest sympathy.

May I express the wish that the Parliament of Religions will be most successful in every way and that it may help to bring about the universal brotherhood of men in the fatherhood of God!

14. REV. FREDERICK BOHN FISHER

*Central Church, Methodist Episcopal, Detroit
(Michigan), U. S. A.*

My heart has had the yearning to return to India and to participate in this celebration, but the duties in America hold me fast.

India has brought a very rich enhancement into all the experiences of my spiritual life. Sometimes I think I am more Indian than American. Please be assured of my prayers for the richest possible success upon all your endeavours.

15. PROF. GIORGIO DEL VECCHIO

Faculty of Jurisprudence, University of Rome (Italy)

(Translated from the original in Italian)

It is a very reassuring fact that through the grave dissensions which divide the peoples today is manifest a moral solidarity based on the universal validity of the supreme principles of duty and law.

For this reason I have learnt with pleasure the announcement of the forthcoming conference to which you have kindly invited me and I am sending you herewith my best wishes.

I am sure that on account of the nobility of the sentiments which inspire this conference will be avoided all that might accen-

tuate the dissensions, such, for example, as have bearings on the diverse forms of Government and political regime. I am equally certain that absolute autonomy of the conscience in matters of religion will be respected in the most complete manner. Fortunately, there exists above the variety of dogmas a common fount of moral verities in which all the peoples and all human beings might and ought to agree. This agreement signifies exactly the bond which is expressed by the term 'religion' in its oldest and most general meaning. Should the forthcoming conference serve, as I hope, to reinforce this bond, it will win a great merit for the history of mankind.

16. PROF. JEAN PRZYLUSKI

College de France, Paris

(Translated from the original in French)

For a time I thought I should be able to attend in person the Parliament. I see now that it will not be possible and I must apologize for it. I shall only participate with my faith and good hopes in that solemn and pious convention.

17. PROF. G. VLADESCO-RACOASSA

University, Bucharest (Rumania)

(Translated from the original in French)

Permit me to avail myself of this opportunity to offer you my sincere congratulations for the admirable work of fraternity which you are pursuing specially in this epoch of the recrudescence of human primitivity and bestiality, and to wish you warmly the best success for your enterprise.

At a moment when the world has need more than ever of peace for the development of international co-operation, your activity would appear to be a happy augury for a better future and I beg of you to accept my expressions of whole-hearted admiration and consider me as among you in this struggle for the socialization not only of the means of production but also of culture and human civilization. It is particularly in this sense

that I see all real amelioration and all real social progress of the world, social justice, prosperity and peace.

18. LADY RACHEL EZRA

Calcutta

It gives me great pleasure to send a message of greeting to the members of the Parliament of Religions. Ever since the days when Swami Vivekananda made his epoch-making impression upon the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, we have looked forward to this Parliament being held here in India and now this is an accomplished fact. I am glad of this. There never was a better time when followers of various faiths should respect and honour one another in their varying beliefs, and this Parliament ought to create this attitude of mind in a unique way. I offer my sincerest good wishes for the success of this gathering here in Calcutta.

19. GAKU MATSUMOTO

President, Nippon Cultural Federation and Member of the House of Peers, Tokyo

I consider myself on the floor of the great Parliament in spirit when this letter reaches you, although physically I am thousands of miles apart. All my wishes go towards the success of the grand scheme, which, I am convinced, is full of great significance for all the religious and cultural movements in this country.

I fervently hope that the spirit that underlies it does not fail to spread abroad. I shall do all in my power and the power of the Federation of which I am the President to spread it at this end.

20. PROF. G. L. DUPRAT

University of Geneva, General Secretary, Federation International des Societes et Instituts de Sociologie Paris and Geneva

(Translated from the original in French)

On behalf of the International Federation of the Sociological

Societies and Institutes of the entire world I have pleasure in addressing you this message designed specially to maintain peace among men by reciprocal respect for all the moral, religious, political and juristic convictions.

Our Thirteenth International Congress of Sociology which is to be held at Paris on the occasion of the World Exhibition in September, 1937, will have as its principal object the study of 'Social equilibria.' In our eyes social equilibrium implies the co-operation of all the functions of collective life, of all the organs, namely, the peoples and the groups, each constituted according to its own 'spirit,' in harmony with all the other 'spirits' dominated by goodwill.

In getting ourselves represented at the Parliament of Religions by our excellent colleague, Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, we desire above all that our collaboration should be the manifestation of our profound humanitarian sentiments and of our desire for world equilibrium in the intellectual and moral co-operation of all the human values.

21. SENATOR ACHILLE LORIA

Turin (Italy)

If nobody is certain of an after-life, everybody is certain of an after-mind, of a frontier, beyond which the human intellect is impotent and the most august thought is able only to create some words (infinite, eternal, etc.) absolutely void of any content untranslatable in a concrete concept. In this ultra-intelligible sphere religious sentiment can display its wings, and science, although furnished with the most powerful instrument of research, is unable to arrest its flight. The progress of science can certainly induce man to make continuous efforts to break the barriers of the intelligible, but the fatal defeat of these efforts pushes man again to the Elysium of faith. Therefore, it is not a paradox that with the increase of the scientific efforts for the enlargement of the sphere of the intelligible, the sentiment of the after-world will become ever more intense.

22. SWAMI KHANSE O KOCHI

*Buddhist Association, Kyoto (Japan)**(Original in Japanese)*

貴敎會始祖 ラーマクリシュナ、パラマハンサー大僧正
百年祭に當り、吾等萬敎大會開催の報を聴き
吾が大日本帝國佛教聯合會、京都府支部は
友誼團體の一、京都佛教護國團と共に祝辭を
贈るの光榮を有す

抑、印度は吾等が信奉する佛教の祖、大聖
釋迦牟尼如來御誕生の國にして、因縁淺からず
今この國に世界萬敎代表者の會同をみるは
愛賀に堪えず、吾等又代表を派せんとするも
會期の切迫はこれを許さず、折角參加の好機を
逸したる事を憾む

今や二十世紀の思想界は東西その洋を問はず
 左右兩翼の相剋全く混亂に陥り之を匡救すべき
 ものに宗教に俟つありと信ず
 冀くは本大會をして世界萬教融合一大思想方
 針を樹立し確固不拔以て極濟の氣運を促
 進し大會をして有意義に終らしめんことを

昭和十二年

(皇紀二千五百九十七年)
 (西歷千九百三十七年)二月

大日本帝國佛教聯合會

京都府支部代表

權僧正 大河内貫靜

(English Rendering)

We, the members of the Branch of Kyoto Prefecture Buddhist Federation as well as the members of Kyoto Bukkyo Gokoku Dan (this is a group for protection of Buddhism in Kyoto Prefecture), have the honour to send you herewith a congratulatory address on the occasion of the Centenary Festival of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the founder of your Mission,¹ during which time, we understand, the Great Religious Convention of the World will be held.

THE ADDRESS

Indeed, India is the country where our Lord Buddha whom we all worship with great devotion, was born. The connection between India and Japan, is thus very deep. We had had a great desire to send our representative to attend the ceremony in your country where religious representatives from all corners of the world will meet. But we are very sorry to miss this opportunity for shortness of time.

The world of thought, nowadays, is losing its ideal. The growing tendency of Communism in the world is spoiling the high ideal of mankind. Who will save this tense situation? Only religious propaganda, we believe, can save the world from this downfall.

We wish a great success of your assembly and pray it may set up the highest and noblest ideal in the world and the world may be blessed with its religious instinct. We attach a great significance to this assembly and wish its success out and out.

23. S. ANDO

*General Secretary, Nippon Bunka Renmei (Japan
Cultural Federation), Tokyo*

The idea of convening such a Parliament is itself a beautiful one and the spirit that is to pervade throughout its atmosphere, as I can gather from your communication under reply, does

¹ The Ramakrishna Mission as well as the Ramakrishna Math was founded by Swami Vivekananda and named after his Master, Sri Ramakrishna.—ED.

nothing but add to its beauty. Our Federation, therefore, feels honoured to have been invited to attend the Parliament.

24. PROF. CORRADO GINI

Demographer and Statistician, University of Rome (Italy)
(*Original in Italian*)

Se per *religione* s'intende ogni movente ultra-razionale che regola le azioni umane, può ben dirsi che senza religione non vi sia per l'umanità speranza di elevarsi al di sopra delle soddisfazioni dei sensi. La ragione costituisce, invero, un meccanismo perfezionato per dirigere la condotta umana, ma esso ha bisogno d'una forza che lo metta in moto, e questa non può essere che l'edonismo, che dirige l'uomo verso l'appagamento delle soddisfazioni individuali, oppure una religione, che subordini tali soddisfazioni al raggiungimento di una finalità più elevata. Perciò nella morale come nella politica, nella scienza come nell'arte e nella filosofia, sono i moventi ultra-razionali, che è quanto dire religiosi, quelli che producono le manifestazioni che si impongono alla storia. Il riconoscimento di tale verità, a cui il Parlamento delle Religioni è certamente destinato a contribuire, rappresenta il primo passo verso l'armonia delle fedi e la tolleranza religiosa, che hanno ispirato l'azione di Sri Ramakrishna.

(*English Rendering*)

If by religion is to be understood all moving causes outside the rational which regulate human actions, I can well assert that without religion there is no hope for mankind to elevate itself above the satisfaction of the senses. Reason constitutes, indeed, a perfect mechanism for directing the conduct of man. But it has the need for a force which sets it in motion. And this force cannot but be either hedonism which directs man towards the attainment of individual satisfactions or a religion which subordinates such satisfactions to the realization of more elevated objectives. Consequently in morals as in politics, in science as in arts and philosophy it is the moving causes lying beyond the region of the rational,—i.e., the religious forces—that produce the manifestations which influence history most markedly. The

recognition of this truth to which the Parliament of Religions is certainly destined to contribute represents the first step towards the harmony of faiths and religious toleration such as inspired the activities of Sri Ramakrishna.

25. MRS. C. M. BEACH

*Organizing Secretary and Founder of the World
Meditation Group, Surrey (England)*

As the organizer of the World Meditation Groups I send our greetings and cordial good wishes to the members and delegates of the Parliament of Religions and for the Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations.

We realize that we have much to learn from India in spiritual matters and in meditation especially and we would be grateful if you will add your forces to ours to help in the spiritual awakening of mankind and in preserving world peace, and perhaps lessening the days of tribulation on earth.

26. PROF. P. SOROKIN

Harvard University, Cambridge (Mass.) U. S. A.

I thank you for the honour of inviting me to the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary. If my academic duties would permit me, I would be glad to come to Calcutta and participate in this Congress. Since I am deeply interested in Hindu culture and, with my limited knowledge, have a profound respect for Ramakrishna, such a desire on my part is comprehensible. Unfortunately my duties at Harvard do not permit me to go away during the time of academic duties.

So far as even a short paper is concerned, I would not be able to put down on it the ideas which I have on this topic. I hope, however, to publish them in my work, *Integral Culture and Its Changes*. In this work I have attempted to give some of my ideas in the field of religion, ethics, law, art and general culture, and have tried to give an interpretation of Hindu culture and have mentioned Ramakrishna and several other modern spiritual leaders of India as well as the ancient leaders. I would be glad

to send a copy of this work to the Committee or to you when it is published.

27. DR. E. T. WILLIAMS

*Professor (Emeritus) of Oriental Languages and Literature,
University of California, Berkeley, U. S. A.*

Sharing fully the faith of Sri Ramakrishna that "every religion is a path to God," I rejoice in the spirit that has prompted you and others to bring into one assemblage, as far as possible, men of every race and creed, thereby making a practical demonstration of religious tolerance and promoting inter-racial and international goodwill.

28. PROF. S. ANGUS

St. Andrew's Hall, Sydney (Australia)

India and the world owe much to such a religious leader and spiritual spokesman as Sri Ramakrishna, and I sincerely wish that the Centenary Celebrations in his honour may prove a great success and help to bring home to your people and to all who visit India for the occasion that all true life is built upon spiritual foundations.

29. PROF. J. M. PERITCH

*University of Belgrade, Yugoslavia, Member of the Academy
of International Law, Hague (Holland)*

(Translated from the original in French)

I feel greatly honoured on account of your inviting me to the Parliament of Religions organized to celebrate the Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna. I consider him to be an apostle of the liberty of conscience, of the harmony of religions, of religious toleration and of concord between the races. It is my very pleasant duty to express to you my most profound gratitude and at the same time I congratulate you on your convening this Parliament of Religions in honour of the great and noble prophet of the two worlds, old and new, such as Sri Ramakrishna was. Let me conclude with my best wishes for the most complete success of the Parliament in the interest of entire mankind.

30. PROF. TRAIAN HERSENT

Institut Social Roman, Bucharest (Rumania)

(Translated from the original in French)

A Congress like yours is specially significant in our times and I should have felt greatly honoured by being able to function in its midst. But my scientific and teaching work as well as other difficulties prevent me from participating personally in the Congress. I have to be content with simply being present in spirit among the participants of the Parliament. Please accept my sincere wishes for the success of your transactions.

31. PROF. G. TUCCI

Member of the Italian Academy, Rome

I have felt much honoured by the kind invitation you have extended to me for participating in the Parliament of Religions to be held at Calcutta in March next, under the auspices of your distinguished society. It would indeed be a great privilege for me to be able to take part in the great congregation of faiths you have been organizing, and it is quite likely that on my way back from Japan, where I shall pass the winter months on a lecture tour, I shall make a pilgrimage to Belur, and say a few words about the debt of humanity to the great Indian Master, Sri Ramakrishna, in my humble way. Even if for some unforeseen reason I should fail to be present personally at the Congress, I shall send my address in time.

I can assure you that the message of Sri Ramakrishna is widely known and appreciated by the cultural circle in Italy, and our Institute (*Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente*) shall spare no pains to contribute to the success of your Congress.

32. PROF. W. SZAFER

Rector, University of Krakow, Poland

I have the honour to communicate that I am extending the leave granted to Mme. Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska so as to enable her to take part in the Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations as the representative of Poland's oldest University.

I feel confident that this active participation of a representative of Cracow University in celebrations of such high moral significance will be helpful in promoting the establishment of closer spiritual bonds between our nations.

33. PROF. E. A. ROSS

*Chairman of the Department of Sociology and
Anthropology, Wisconsin University, U. S. A.*

Personally I have no religion, being content with such light as science sheds, but I recognize that religions will live on into the distant future and may yet play a major rôle in socializing Man. In these days of easy communication and multiplying contacts among peoples, consciousness of race differences becomes more dangerous. Spirit may weave the bonds which prevent the most exterminating of all wars, viz., inter-racial wars.

The only way to prevent religion from being a devastating divider and sunderer of men is to present toleration of religious differences as a sacred obligation, transcending any obligation to make the worship of one's God prevail.

34. PROF. RICHARD C. THURNWALD

University, Berlin (Germany)

I think your idea of honouring Sri Ramakrishna by an international gathering of the kind you have arranged is excellent. Such a manifestation may be particularly appropriate at the present juncture of European and world affairs. It would be desirable indeed that its resonance could travel to all places from which representatives appear.

35. J. C. MAXWELL GARNETT, C.B.E., SC.D.

Secretary of the League of Nations Union, London

I regret I shall be prevented from coming to India at all this year. I note, however, that Sir Francis Younghusband will take the Chair.

Every good wish for the success of your Congress.

36. SHAIKH ABU NASR GILANI

*Gilan (Iran)**(Original in Persian with English Rendering)*

بنیاد و شالوده تمام مذاهب یکی است و رسائ تمام مذاهب
 خیالات شان از بر این بود و هست که تمام مردم را باوصاف
 حله و اخلاق پسندیده تصیف نمایند پس بنیاد و شالوده تمام
 مذاهب یکی است و طرق مختلف است چون مرحوم میرداماد کرشنا
 همین مقصود را به تمام عالم اعلان کرده و اتحاد تمام مذاهب را خواستگار
 بوده جائز دارد که اهل تمام مذاهب از برای او طایفه مغفرت کرده
 و حق کنند که تمام نیک آن مرحوم ابد اله عریاقی بماند

ابوالنور گیلانی

(Shaikh Abu Nasr Gilani).

The foundations of all religions are one and the same. The Founders of all the religious systems of the world had and still have this point in view and preach to the people this laudable and praise-worthy fundamental principle underlying every religion.

Therefore, the foundations of all religions are one but structures only are differently made.

Sri Ramakrishna had taught this very principle to the world and all his endeavour had been to bring about a unity in all the religious systems of the world. It is, therefore, incumbent on every human being, of whatever creed he may be, to pray for his soul and to endeavour to establish permanently all the good works done by him for humanity.

37. MUHAMMAD HASAN KASHANI

Yezd (Iran)

(Original in Persian)

برگاه خدایان گشت از رسید، و نظر بجهای گوناگون که پست بخشان گریه دوزند باشند که از بود و دیگران از ازلت چنین است که
و عارض مگر را بستاید اما همچو به باغبان چنین نیایش برده و در اینستانند دایب که از عالم گریه میگویند ازین نعم دلزدیده بگردان گشتند او
سر بسجده نمند چنانکه شمشیر بر این سدی در این پست خود نهاده

به جهان خرم از آن که جهان خرم از ازلت
نظم بر عباد که در عالم از ازلت

بردن پاک باغبان چنین سوزان گشتن است که با هر شمع که بگردد و بخورند و بخورند که بخورند گشتن جهان را به هر چه که در ازلت و برین که به ابرار
ان باغبان زانای پد برد خود چون شمشیر برانید که در ابدان بر روی گشتن و در برانید بآب روزنه طهارت که در ازلت

(English Rendering)

When a few friends arrive at a flower garden, they look at the flowers that adorn the garden and see the flowers in their different colours and shapes.

There is every likelihood that one of them will be attracted by the appearance of the flower, the other by the sweet smell and the third by the freshness and the special attributes.

But all of them combine equally in the praise of the gardener and surely their attention is drawn to the beauty of the creator of the flowers and the flower garden.

Unhesitatingly from their heart of hearts rises up a praise for Him who is the creator of all.

Sadi, the famous poet of Shiraz (Iran), has in like manner sung his praise of Him—"I am enamoured of the world, for the world is the result of His love.

"I am in love with the whole world for the whole world is from Him."

May the blessing be on the soul of the gardener, Sri Ramakrishna! He brought into shape the flowers, imparted scent to them and combined them all into one unity, namely, the Flower, in the garden of the world.

And those who go deep into the secrets of this wise gardener will feel themselves like dew-drops which every morn may settle on the petals of any one of the flowers and at sunrise evaporate.

38. PROF. HERBERT G. WOOD

Birmingham (England)

I am the more sorry that I cannot be present in the Parliament which is to be connected with the celebration of the first Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna. I have never forgotten my first introduction to him and his teaching through an article by Max Müller, which I read when I was still a schoolboy. It was almost

my first introduction to the religious thought of India and to the comparative study of religions. I have never lost the feelings of interest in and respect for the person and teaching of Sri Ramakrishna which were then implanted in me.

I am a convinced Christian, and my prayer is that all men may come to the knowledge of God through Christ, but as a Christian I hold in honour a religious leader who can be acclaimed as a prophet of freedom of conscience and inter-racial amity.

39. DR. F. THIERFELDER

Secretary, Deutsche Akademie (German Academy)

Munich

(Original in German)

Für Ihr Schreiben vom 23-7-1936 danke ich Ihnen aufrichtig und kann Ihnen zu meiner Freude mitteilen, dass der Herr Präsident der Deutschen Akademie anlässlich eines Empfanges des Maharajahs von Baroda, der noch in diesem Monat stattfinden soll, auf die Bedeutung Sri Ramakrishnas zu sprechen kommen und bei dieser Gelegenheit auch der Hundertjahresfeier gedenken wird.

Für die freundliche Übersendung des Festberichtes danke ich Ihnen vielmals. Wir haben mit grossem Interesse gesehen, wie weit die Wirkung dieses Philosophen zu spüren ist und wie in allen Erdteilen seiner gedacht wurde.

(English Rendering)

I have pleasure in informing you that in connection with the reception to be given to the Maharaja of Baroda, the President of our Academy (Prof. Karl Haushofer) will also speak about Ramakrishna and about the Centenary Celebrations.

We are happy to see how widely the influence of this philosopher is to be traced and that in all the quarters of the world he has been thought of.

40. PROF. OTHMAR SPANN

*Institute of Economics and Sociology, University
of Vienna (Austria)*

(Translated from the original in German)

It is an error to believe that there can be a purely empirical investigation. Every so-called induction must be based on a concept of the subject even if it be a hypothetical one. That is why the last methodological root of genuine investigation in the sciences of experience as in other sciences points always to the metaphysical. No science is possible without a metaphysical foundation, at any rate, no science of spiritual phenomena.

41. PROF. TAN YUN-SHAN

Sino-Indian Cultural Society, Nanking

The crisis through which the world is passing today and the yet darker days that are ahead make it all the more necessary at the present moment to reiterate the message of harmony and oneness in the truth of which Sri Ramakrishna lived, moved and had his being, and which was so eloquently proclaimed to the world by his worthy disciple, the great Swami Vivekananda.

Today as I remember Sri Ramakrishna, my mind flits across a distance of more than two thousand years when Confucius in China and Buddha in India preached a similar message for the well-being of humanity. The destiny of man has passed through so many changes since then; but its renewal into the creation for him of a happier social order based on universal peace and equality is yet to come, and it will come only when the teachings of those truest servants of humanity are understood and followed by every country in the world.

42. MISS M. M. SHARPLES

*Honorary Secretary of the Society for Promoting the
Study of Religions, London*

We wish you every success for good attendance at your interesting gathering.

43. PROF. WINTERNITZ, GERMAN UNIVERSITY, PRAGUE
(Czechoslovakia) (Since deceased)

I wish I could come myself to read the paper before the Parliament. I could not wish for a better forum for the subject which is created in my paper. But unfortunately the state of my health does not permit me any travelling to distant parts at all.

I wish and hope your Parliament which is to conclude the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations will be a full success.

44. PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University, Benares.

Much regret my ill-health prevents my going Calcutta to take part in Centenary Celebrations Trust you and other fellow-workers will excuse my absence Heartily join with you all in spirit in doing honour to sacred memory of Paramahansa (Telegram).

45. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

Ex-President, Indian National Congress

Illness prevents attending Parliament of Religions plus Ramakrishna Centenary functions epoch-making nationally internationally prayerfully wishing success (Telegram).

46. SRI SWAMI JAYENDRA PURI

Mandaliswara, Benares

Circumstances prevent my personal attendance in this great convention. All the same I welcome this admirable attempt to bring together all the great religions of the world on the common platform of unity and amity. Let us then forget even for a single day the ridiculous petty quarrels over things which are mere non-essentials of the religions. Let us remember even for a single day that we, the different peoples of the world, are all children of one God and a God without a second—*Ekamevādvitīyam*. Nay, more, let us remember even for a single day that in the One and Undivided God we, the indivisible parts of Him, are also one and undivided. The Hindu religion teaches that he is an inferior

bhakta or devotee who worships his God only in a temple or only in an image, and has no regard for his fellow-beings. But he is a better *bhakta* who not only worships his God but cherishes regard for His other *bhaktas* of any denomination, love for his equals, compassion for his inferiors, and no feeling of antagonism to his enemies, if there be any. The Hindu religion does not stop here, but goes even further and declares that he is incomparably the best *bhakta* who realises his own self in all beings and all beings in his own Self without distinction of land, creed and caste, colour or sex. This is the great Truth—the great message of our *Vedānta*. I wish and pray to God that the life of each and all of us may approximate to this great truth. I wish that this convention may be crowned with glory because of its noble endeavour towards the realization of this truth. That it is not a mere dream may be perceived from the outstanding fact that the life of the great soul whose Centenary we are celebrating was a proof positive of this truth.

Om Śāntiḥ! Śāntiḥ!! Śāntiḥ!!!

47. SIR P. S. SIVASWAMY IYER

*Sometime Member of the Executive Council
Government of Madras*

Many thanks for your kind invitation to the Parliament of Religions to be held in Calcutta in March, 1937, in connection with the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations. I very much regret that my health does not permit me to attend the Parliament.

I wish every success to the Conference.

48. HON'BLE MR. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

Premier, Government of Madras

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your kind invitation for the Ramakrishna Centenary Parliament of Religions.

I am sorry it will not be possible for me to be present. I wish the Parliament the success which the occasion and the efforts taken by devout souls richly deserve.

PART III

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES

AT THE PARLIAMENT

SESSIONS

CHAPTER VI

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES

I. DR. SIR BRAJENDRA NATH SEAL, KT., M.A., PH.D., D.SC.

Ex-Vice-Chancellor, Mysore University

DEAR FRIENDS,

We are met today to celebrate the Centenary of the birth, or, as others would have it, the advent into this world, of Saint Paramahansa Ramakrishna, and we must approach all questions in a calm and dispassionate spirit.

More than twenty-five years ago, I wrote at Sister Nivedita's request a paper entitled, 'An Early Stage in Vivekananda's Mental Development,' which I concluded with an account of a visit I had paid to Vivekananda's master one stormy evening, with an accompaniment of thunder and lightning, and this well suited the mental commotion which that visit brought me to. And now in the calm and dispassion of approaching death, I deem it a privilege to be able to share in the Celebrations of the Centenary of one who in his sojourn on earth was above time and above space.

RAMAKRISHNA'S SUCCESSIVE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES: GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF HIS RELIGIOUS LIFE

The successive stages in the growth and development of Ramakrishna's religious life are well-known and have been thus summarised:

(1) In his early boyhood, he took part in popular shows and exhibitions such as *Kṛishṇalīlā* and *Gājan* songs. He would play the part of Krishna or Siva in these popular shows.

(2) On the death of his elder brother, he became priest at *Dakshineshwar Kālī-Bāḍī* (Temple of Kālī). He wanted to see

Kālī, the Divine Mother, and he threatened to stab himself to death if Kālī would not deign to appear. He was half-mad and at last he had, as he thought, a vision of Kālī.

(3) He now began to practise austerities. He took on himself a vow to abjure woman and gold (*kāminī* and *kāñchana*). Taking gold in one hand and mud in the other, he would mutter, 'gold is mud and mud is gold.' In the same way he conquered all cravings of the flesh and in the end he revered every woman as mother.

(4) Now came to him a youthful and beautiful woman who initiated him into Tāntric Practices (*sādhana*). Lying on her lap he meditated on Kālī. She was a *vāmāchārīnī*, using wine and flesh in the rituals of worship. He worshipped her as a naked goddess, and all sensual cravings were thus seared and burnt up in him.

HIS SĀDHANĀS AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

He sought to experience each religion in its entirety in *sādhana* or spiritual discipline. Now he would be a Moslem *fakir*, with appropriate rituals, attitudes and garb, and now a Christian neophyte, stricken with a sense of sin and crying for salvation. There was nothing of mere pose or mere imagination in all this. Here was an individual soul who would enrich himself with all human experience in religious life and history. And precious elements were thus added to his Hindu heritage—the sense of human brotherhood and equality from the Moslem faith, and the need of salvation from sin from Christianity. In the same way, Vaishṇava *saṅkīrtana* and music were added to his religious exercises. These became elements (*aṅgas*) of his *sādhana*.

EARLY PERSONAL INFLUENCES ON RAMAKRISHNA

(1) One of the early personal influences on Ramakrishna was that of saint Dayananda Sarasvati who took his stand on the Vedas as teaching the one Universal Religion and fought all idolatry in a militant mood. But his influence could not be lasting or deep. Ramakrishna's genuineness led him to revolt against

Hindu practices. He would repudiate caste and even serve the *methar* (sweeper), which could hardly have been pleasing to the Orthodox Vedic brotherhood. He felt himself drawn to Tota Puri and other Indian saints and his experiences prepared him for his mission in life. It was Tota Puri who initiated him into *sannyāsa*.

(2) He came under the influence of the Brāhmo Samāj, and probably this deepened his sense of divine motherhood which his worship of Kālī had instilled into him.

The New Dispensation as preached by Brahmananda Keshab Chandra broadened his religious outlook by giving him a keen sense of certain social evils and immoralities which had corrupted later Hindu religious practices.

PARAMAHAMSA RAMAKRISHNA'S CENTRAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO RELIGIOUS LIFE AND IDEALS: HIS MYSTICISM

(1) Ramakrishna, like Rammohun himself, was a composite personality. In contemplating truth from the absolute (*nirupādhi*) point of view he negated all conditions and modes (*upādhis*), but from the relative or conditional (*sopādhi*) point of view he worshipped Kālī the Divine Mother as well as other modes and adumbrations of the Deity. He worshipped the one in all, and the all in one and he saw no contradiction but only a fuller reality in this. So also he reconciled *sākāra* and *nirākāra upāsana* (iconic and aniconic worship). For him there was nothing in the form of the Deity but God manifesting Himself. The antagonism between matter and spirit no longer existed for him.

(2) What he refused to delude himself with was that he was above all conditions and all infirmities of the flesh. But in his trances (*samādhi*) he developed ecstasia in its purest form, such as has been rarely witnessed in the West in the religious world since the days of Eckhart and Tauler.

(3) Like most Hindu saints he had an inexhaustible store of homely sayings, adages, metaphors, allegories, parables, which could bring spiritual truths home to the meanest understanding and even to the child.

RAMMOHUN, KESHABCHANDRA AND RAMAKRISHNA

Rammohun Roy, the precursor and in a very real sense the father of modern India, sought the Universal Religion, the common basis of the Hindu, Moslem, Christian and other faiths. He found that each of the national religions was based on this common faith with a certain distinctive historical and cultural embodiment.

It is fundamental to note that Rammohun Roy played two rôles in his own person :

(1) As a Universalist he formulated the creed of what was called Neo-theo-philanthropy ('a new love of God and Man') on positive and constructive lines. He construed the *Gāyatrī* on this basis. And, strange to say, this Hindu became one of the four fathers of the Unitarian creed and worship in the West, the other three being Price, Priestley and Channing.

(2) As a Nationalist Reformer, Rammohun had a threefold mission :

- (a) As a Hindu Reformer he gave a Unitarian redaction of the Hindu *Sāstras* from the *Vedānta* and *Mahā-nirvāṇa Tantra*.
- (b) As a Moslem defender of the faith he wrote the *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* and *Monazaratul Adiyān*, which were polemical works.
- (c) As a Christian he gave a Unitarian version of the entire body of the scriptures, old and new, in his controversies with the Christian missionaries.

Rammohun was thus in himself a universalist and three nationalists all in one.

Maharshi Devendranath organised the creed, rituals and *anushṭhānas* (observances) in the Ādi Brāhmo Samāj on a Hindu Upanishadic basis.

The work of formulating Universal Religion, free from Hindu or Christian theology, fell to Brahmananda Keshabchandra, who attempted this on an eclectic basis, and thus organized rituals and modes of worship.

In his earlier days Keshab made Christianity the central religion, but in later life he was drawn more and more to Vaishnavism for emotional religious exercises. This was selective eclecticism.

He thus variegated and fulfilled religion and religious experiences, as well as concepts, rituals and worship in a way never attempted before. Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Vaishnavism, not to mention other religions, each contributed its essence and substance to Keshab's religion of the New Dispensation, and what was new was the eclectic cult and culture.

The next step (and it was indeed a fundamental innovation) was taken by Paramahansa Ramakrishna. The Paramahansa would experience each cult and religion in its totality or as one whole experience.

HOW HE DIFFERED FROM BRAHMANANDA KESHABCHANDRA

Keshabchandra would emphasise the central essence of each religion and acknowledge its truth. In this sense Brahmananda Keshab would say, 'It is not that every religion contains truths, but every religion is true.' But as there are different religions it follows that they convey different aspects of truth. They transcribe not a part but the whole of life, each from one fundamental standpoint.

But the religions contend with one another. Each claims that its positive standpoint is the only true standpoint and all other standpoints are erroneous. But Keshab differed. He viewed life from all these different standpoints eclectically. He selected from each religion what he considered its essence, both theoretical and practical. He formulated a collation of all these partial aspects in the Brähmo faith and more especially in the New Dispensation creed.

Put more briefly, Keshab's view is that every religion as represented by its central essence is true. But it does not contain the whole truth, which can be viewed only from an eclectic standpoint. The New Dispensation would select the distinctive central essence from each religion.

But Keshabchandra must not be misunderstood. He believed with Rammohun in the unity of all religions, but, as he said, he meant not the collection of Truths but the unification of truths in one ideal. Unity and universalism must, therefore, qualify eclecticism and secure an international expression of religion. This was Rammohun's Universalism.

There were later developments of the New Dispensation creed, and the final phase was reached in the conception of a harmony of religions in the form of a synthetic faith and their 'amalgamation in a beautiful synthesis.' This synthesis is, of course, entirely different from a synthesis of cultures.

Finally, it should be noted that the foundations of the New Dispensation were laid in 1879-1882 after the Sādhānist schism, and that subsequent developments of doctrine came to light (1) under Pratap Chandra Majumdar's lead in favour of an oriental version of Christian faith (Oriental Christ), and (2) under Gour Govinda Upadhyaya's lead in favour of a Veda-Vedānta-Purāṇic version of the New Dispensation. The New Dispensation creed, as it stands now, is an amalgam of all these three phases.

Subject to these qualifications, Keshab's creed was eclectic. Here it was that Ramakrishna differed from Keshabchandra. Indeed he differed from his predecessors in two essential respects:

- (1) He maintained that the practices of each religion with its rituals and disciplines give its essence more really and vitally than its theoretical dogmas or creeds; and
- (2) It is not by selective eclecticism but by syncretism and the whole-hearted acceptance of a religion that its full value and worth could be realised and experienced.

Ramakrishna held that selective extracts would kill the vital element in each religion. He would be a Hindu with the Hindu, a Moslem with the Moslem and a Christian with the Christian in order to experience the whole truth and efficacy of each of these religions. But he would not practise different religious disciplines or hold different creeds at one and the same time. The

observances, practices and rituals of each religion are organic to it. He would tentatively accept the whole creed and ritual of the Moslem (or of the Christian Catholic), in order to experience its religious efficacy and truth. In all this there might be temptations or pitfalls, but one must be as an innocent child or babe, and pass unscathed through fire. It was thus that the Paramahansa passed successively through Christian and Moslem experiences. Such was the Paramahansa's Syncretism.

THE QUESTION OF ASCETICISM AND OF CELIBACY

The great founders of Religion have been *sannyasins* or ascetics. Such were the Buddha and the Christ. Such were also St. Francis of Assisi, Chaitanya and Ramakrishna. Most of them forsook their wives or mothers for bringing redemption to mankind. The wives and mothers of the saviours of mankind have thus suffered vicariously. Celibacy was the ideal of these religious teachers.

OTHER IDEALS

Chinese and Greek teachers of mankind as well as the Indian Rishis of old did not forsake the life of the world. This is also the case with Gandhi. This is also the modern ideal.

MODERNISM IN RELIGION

Ramakrishna was thus a cosmic Humanist in religion and not a mere nationalist. He gave the impulse and initiative and this must be completed in our age.

One such characteristic note of our day, derived from Christianity, is faith in a suffering God, the faith of the dispossessed millions as well as of the outcasts of Humanity. And not in religion only, as religion is ordinarily understood. Humanism has now various new phases and developments. Leaving out Comte's positivistic humanism with its worship of the '*Grand Etre*' (Great Being) and Babism, with its offshoot, Bahaism, the religion of human brotherhood,—we may turn to later phases such as the new concepts of religion without a God (as in Julian Huxley and many others of our day). This is not all. Impersonal ideals of Truth, Beauty and Goodness have

sometimes replaced the old faith in a personal God. And it is not merely the religious sentiment which claims its own pabulum in our day. A passion for Science, for Philosophy or for Scientific Philosophy, a passion for Art or for *rasa* (aesthetic sentiment) in general is the badge of modernism in our culture and seeks to displace much of the old religious sentiment. Herbert Spencer's agnosticism, Darwin's characteristic impassiveness which is only the Baconian drylight of old, and John Stuart Mill's atheism which would conserve the value of religion without its beliefs, with agnosticism and Zoroastrian dualism as occasional variants—all these are only examples in our day of the man in quest of a God.

PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

Our present quest is for a Parliament of Religions, a quest which we seek to voice in this assembly. But this is only a stepping stone to a Parliament of Man or a Federation of World Cultures.

Articles of faiths, creeds and dogmas divide man from man. But we seek in religion a meeting ground of Humanity. What we want is not merely Universal Religion in its quintessence, as Rammohun sought it in his earlier days,—not merely an eclectic religion by compounding the distinctive essences, theoretical as well as practical, of the different religions, as Keshabchandra sought it, but experience as a whole as it has unfolded itself in the history of man, and this can be realised by us, as Ramakrishna taught, by syncretic practice of Religion by being a Hindu with the Hindu, a Moslem with the Moslem, a Christian with the Christian and a Universalist with the Universalist, and all this as a stepping stone to the Ultimate Realisation of God-in-Man and Man-in-God.

I have hitherto spoken of the Parliament of Religions, taking religion in the concrete, but I will now take religion and religious experience as a force organising man's life and history.

Religion in this broader sense, as distinguished from religions in the concrete, is a force that organises life and life activities. All culture and all concepts, in fact, are dominated by the idea of

Religion at this stage. Food, sex-relations, the family, tribal life and warfare are all regulated by the religious ideal. Empirical Science and the folk-life are grouped round the central idea of the religion of a race or people. And, in the course of progress, the higher religions are evolved, and the Parliament of Religions is the apex of this ascending course of religious evolution.

But the religious expression is not only expression of the Ultimate Experience. We have also Science, Philosophy or (better) Scientific Philosophy, Art or the Aesthetic sensibility, *rasa* (sentiment) or *rasānubhūti*, or again mystical experience, all these being phases of Humanism. And the consummation is to be found in cosmic Humanism which frees Humanism from its limitation of outlook by finding man in the Universe and the Universe in Man. And we must seek to be free not of this or that state but of the solar system, and the stellar systems and beyond, in one word, of the Universe.

The Parliament of Religions is but the vanguard, and heralds the approach of a new order. The personal life which has hitherto been the centre of development, must make room for larger personalities, such as the masses, the community and the age and all this must consciously regulate humanity. In other words—

- (a) The mass consciousness or the mass mind must be the ruling idea of the coming order of Humanism.
- (b) The community life will seek its satisfaction as an intermediary between the individual and the State.
- (c) The next stage in this evolution will be the ruling idea of the age or the age consciousness.
- (d) And this is to be completed by the consciousness of the race (or humanity as a whole) as the dominant factor in our evolving life.

Our immediate objective today is a Parliament of Religions. But in my view this is only a prelude to a larger Parliament, the Parliament of Man, voicing the Federation of World Cultures, as I have said, and what this will seek to establish is a synthetic view of life conceived not statically but dynamically as a progressive evolution of Humanity.

2. C. L. CHEN

Consul-General for China, Calcutta

FRIENDS,

Before I introduce the speakers of this morning's session of the Parliament of Religions, permit me to say a few words by way of introduction. We are met today in this intellectual centre of India to discuss seriously the religious problems of life. Swami Vivekananda once said, "Perish India, perish all religion in the world." At this period when the nations of the world are seemingly embarking upon a mad policy of increased armament for war of offence and defence, how fitting it is that India should again come forth to sound and herald the message of religion, the message of brotherhood, love and peace. The intellectual religious masters of the world are sharing with you Indians today the work of enlightenment. You Indians have searched your mind long and patiently, and you possess a synthetic knowledge of God which other peoples do not seem to have. In the intensity of your researches, perhaps, there are points you have overlooked. Maybe some of these points will be suggested and made known to you by the addresses and speeches of the foreign representatives to this Parliament of Religions. A bewildered world today is groping in the dark. Where is the pathway of Life? What is the solution to all our doubts and misgivings? May the deliberations of this Parliament of Religions blaze the path to truth, to peace and goodwill among men, yea, to God Himself!

3. SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

Calcutta

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

In this age when material prosperity and commercial supremacy are the ideals and ruling powers of a civilized nation; when each nation distrusting its neighbours is armed to the teeth with infernal weapons of death to protect its self-interest and to massacre its innocent neighbours with unimaginable violence as it

is manifested today in a civilized country like Spain in Europe; when the insatiable greed of a civilized nation led by the most powerful Dictator has subdued and conquered by means fair or foul a weaker nation as it has been in the case of Abyssinia; when human beings are regarded as soulless machines fitted to become the fodder of cannon and machine guns; when in the East similar strife and conflict are rife, and when the abominable communalism is sucking the heart's blood like the mythical vampire in India;—it is high time that the message of peace and goodwill and love for one's enemy as was taught two thousand years ago by the meek and gentle Son of Man in Galilee should once again be heralded and emphasized with full spiritual force to suit the conditions of the present time.

To fulfil this great purpose,—to establish righteousness and to destroy evil—the Almighty Lord has manifested Himself in the form of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, at whose Centenary this Parliament of Religions is convened.

The present upheaval of the spiritual tide, the waves of which traversing nearly one half of the world have touched the shores of America, was produced by the Christ-like character and divine personality of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna who is recognized throughout India as the greatest saint of modern India, and revered and honoured today by all classes of Hindus as the Ideal Manifestation (*Avatāra*) of the Divine glory. His life was so wonderful and unparalleled that within ten years after his departure from this earth, it attracted the admiration, respect and reverence, not only of all classes of people of India, but also of many of the distinguished English and German scholars of the nineteenth century, who happened to know something about him.

A short account of the life of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna appeared for the first time in the January number of the *Imperial and Quarterly Review* of 1896 under the title of "A Modern Hindu Saint." It was an able article penned by Prof. C. H. Tawney who was for many years the Professor of Sanskrit in the Calcutta University and the distinguished Librarian of India House in London. This article aroused the interest of a great many European scholars, among whom the late Prof. Max Müller show-

ed his appreciation by publishing in the August number of the *Nineteenth Century* of 1896 a short sketch of this Hindu saint's life, entitled "A Real Mahātman." In this celebrated article, which was for some time the subject of most severe criticism both in England and in India among many of the Christian missionaries and the Theosophists, the noted Professor showed the difference between the imaginary *Mahātmās* of the Theosophists and the real *Mahātman* or the great soul of India, who had reached God-consciousness and had manifested Divinity in all the actions of his daily life. He gave a brief account of the extraordinary life of Sri Ramakrishna paying him the highest tribute of honour and respect that a Christian scholar could give to a Divine manifestation in the so-called heathen land. Later, in 1896, he compiled and published *Ramakrishna, His Life and Sayings*, collecting more facts about the life and sayings of this exemplary character perfumed with Divine personality.

In 1903 the Vedanta Society of New York, U. S. A., published in a separate volume the sayings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, and the *Gospel of Ramakrishna* with an introduction by Swami Abhedananda in 1907. The unsectarian and universal teachings of Sri Ramakrishna attracted the attention of the sincere and earnest seekers after Truth among the Christians of America and Europe ; and the same *Gospel of Ramakrishna* (New York edition) was translated into Spanish and was published in Buenos Aires in South America in 1915. It was also translated into Portuguese and published from Brazil, South America. In Europe it was translated and published in Danish, Scandinavian and Czechoslovakian languages.

The well-renowned artist, the late Frank Dvůrák of Prague, Austria, after reading this *Gospel*, was so deeply impressed that he painted the life-size portrait of Sri Ramakrishna.

In 1925 *The Life of Sri Ramakrishna* with an introduction by M. K. Gandhi was published by the Advaita Ashram of Mayavati in India. Later on the celebrated French savant Romain Rolland wrote *The Life of Ramakrishna* in French in 1928, which was translated into English by E. F. Malcolm Smith and was published by the Advaita Ashram in 1930. In this

volume Romain Rolland said:—"Allowing for differences of country and time Ramakrishna is the younger brother of our Christ" (p. 13).

The late Prof. Max Müller was deeply impressed by the originality of this great saint and real *Mahātman* who was not brought up within the precincts of any university and who drew the waters of his wisdom neither from any book or scripture, nor from any ancient prophet, but directly from the eternal fountain-head of all knowledge and wisdom. He reached the goal of all religions, not by following the path that was laid down by any religious prophet or spiritual teacher of any country, but by following a path which was original and untrodden by any of the Saviours of the world. The late Prof. Max Müller was also struck by the broad, liberal and absolutely unsectarian spirit which pervades the utterances of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. Indeed, the life and sayings of the Bhagavan have given a death-blow to the sectarian bigotry and fanaticism of the so-called religious world. Whosoever has read his sayings is impressed with the universality of his spiritual ideals which embrace the ideals of all mankind.

From his childhood Sri Ramakrishna fought against all sectarian doctrines and dogmas, yet at the same time, he showed that all sects and creeds were but the paths which lead sincere and earnest souls to the one Universal Goal of all religions. Having realized the highest ideal of every religion, by following the methods and practices of the various sects and creeds of the world, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna gave to humanity whatever spiritual experiences and realizations he had acquired through *sādhana*. Every idea which he gave was fresh from above and unadulterated by the product of human intellect, culture or scholastic education. Each step of his life from babyhood to the last moment was extraordinary. Every stage was like the unfoldment of a chapter of a new scripture, especially written out by the unseen Hand to befit the minds of the East and the West and to fulfil the spiritual needs of the twentieth century.

This great sage showed in his life how to cultivate the search after God and proved, by his example, that wherever there is

extreme longing to see God, there is the nearness of the realization of the Absolute Truth. The life of this great "Real Mahātman" has been the grand testimony to the fact that even in this age Divinity can be reached and that Divine perfection can be acquired by those who are pure in heart, chaste, simple and who can devote their whole heart and soul to God for spiritual realization alone, and not for any material gain.

We have neither seen nor heard of a character purer, simpler, more chaste and more godly than that of this ideal *Mahātman*, Bhagavan Śrī Ramakrishna. He was the personification of purity and chastity, and embodiment of truthfulness. His life was a life of absolute renunciation and he never cared for the pleasures and comforts of earthly existence. The only comfort, pleasure, or happiness which he felt in his life was at the time when he was in the blissful state of *samādhi* or God-consciousness—when his soul being liberated from the bondage of physical body soared high in the infinite space of the Absolute and entered into the abode of Everlasting Peace and Blessedness.

He could separate his soul from the cage of the physical organism at his will, and he had perfect control over this great *yoga* power (*vibhūti*). He never recognized earthly relations, but God was his father, mother, brother, sister and everything.

Ramakrishna taught that every woman, old or young, was the representative of the Divine Mother on earth. He worshipped God as the Mother of the Universe, and the Divine Mother, as he often used to say, showed him that all women represented the Divine Motherhood on earth. For the first time in the religious history of the world, this idea was preached by a Divine Incarnation and upon it depends the salvation of men and especially of women of all countries from immorality, corruption and all other vices which prevail in a civilized community. It was Ramakrishna who by his own example established the truth of spiritual marriage on the soul plane alone, and not on the physical, even in this age of sensuality. He had a wife whom he always treated with reverence and whom he always looked upon as the representative of his Divine Mother. He never had any sex relation with her, or with any woman, on the physical plane. His wife, the Blessed

Virgin, Sarada Devi, lived like an embodiment of Divine Motherhood with innumerable spiritual children around her. She, in turn, always regarded the Bhagavan as her Blessed Mother Divine in a human form.

Up to the last moment of his earthly career the Bhagavan was absolutely pure, chaste and a perfect child of his Divine Mother of the Universe. Furthermore, he uplifted the ideal of womanhood on the spiritual plane by accepting his *guru* in the form of a woman. No other saviour or spiritual leader has ever given such an honour to womanhood in the annals of religious history.

The mission of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was to show by his living example how a truly spiritual man, being dead to the world of senses, can live on the plane of God-consciousness ; it was to prove that each individual soul is immortal and potentially Divine. His mission was to establish harmony between religious sects and creeds. For the first time it was absolutely demonstrated by Ramakrishna that all religions are like so many paths leading to the same Goal, that the realization of the same Almighty Being is the highest Ideal of Christianity, Mohammedanism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, as well as of all other religions of the world. Sri Ramakrishna's mission was to proclaim the eternal Truth that God is one but has many aspects, and that the same one God is worshipped by different nations under various names and forms ; that He is personal, impersonal and beyond both ; that He is with name and form and yet nameless and formless. His mission was to establish the worship of the Divine Mother and thus to elevate the ideal of womanhood into Divine Motherhood. His mission was to show by his own example that true spirituality can be transmitted and that salvation can be obtained through the grace of a Divine Incarnation. His mission was to declare before the world that psychic powers and the power of healing are obstacles in the path of the attainment of God-consciousness.

Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna possessed all the *yoga* powers, but he seldom exercised those powers, especially the power of healing diseases. Moreover, he always prevented his disciples from either seeking or exercising those powers. But one power

which we have seen him frequently exercise was the Divine power to transform the character of a sinner and to lift a worldly soul to the plane of superconsciousness by a single touch. He would take the sins of others upon himself and would purify them by transmitting his own spirituality and opening the spiritual eyes of his true followers.

The days of prophecy have passed before our eyes. The manifestations of the Divine powers of one who is worshipped today by thousands as the latest Incarnation of Divinity, we have witnessed with our eyes. Blessed are they who have seen him and touched his holy feet. May the glory of Śrī Ramakrishna be felt by all nations of the earth, may his Divine power be manifested in the earnest and sincere souls of his devotees of all countries in all ages to come, is the prayer of his spiritual child and servant.

4. KAKA KALELKAR

Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Parishad (Indian Hindi Literature Society), Wardha, C. P.

(Opening Speech)

FRIENDS,

We are all meeting at a time when all the religions of the world are on their trial. Religion is the binding force and yet men have been quarrelling with one another in the name of religion. We have today to vindicate the place of religion as the greatest binding force in human life. I am glad that we are meeting here in the name of the spiritual giant of India—Śrī Ramakrishna Paramahansa. It was he who proved to us, not by intellectual process but by going through the spiritual experiences, that all the religions are true, that all are equally acceptable and all are equally elevating. That is why the Parliament of Religions ought to meet in the name of Śrī Ramakrishna. The first Parliament was held in 1893 at Chicago, and the illustrious disciple of Śrī Ramakrishna went there to represent India. Today the Parliament has come to India and it is held in the name of Śrī Rama-

krishna. Before I proceed, I should like to read here a letter which I received from Mahatma Gandhi by way of blessing. It is of course in Hindi. Rendered into English, the letter would read:

“ You are going to the *Dharma Sabhā*—the Parliament of Religions. It is associated with the holy name of Sri Ramakrishna. I do hope that the *Sabhā* will do something that will give a lead and will guide the followers of all faiths. What will the Parliament say in respect of all the religions? Are all the religions equal as we hold or is there any one particular religion which is in the sole possession of truth, the rest being either untrue or a mixture of truth and errors as many believe? The opinion of the Parliament in such matters must prove helpful guidance for us.”

I also trust that we shall meet here, as hearts meeting hearts, not on the intellectual plane, but on the spiritual plane. We must be able to turn out something useful to mankind. Now whatever I have got to say, I shall say at the end.

(*Concluding Remarks*)

FRIENDS,

When religions come together, they always come with evils. Sir Francis Younghusband has cited a beautiful and happy simile, viz., every child thinks that its own mother is the best. But children do not force upon other children to accept their mothers. That is the wisdom children have. If all religions were to show that same wisdom without inviting people to renounce their religion and follow a particular religion as the only true religion, I think we shall have cleared all conflicts. The very idea of the Parliament of Religions is, I suppose, based on this assumption and it is a fact that all religions are true.

Friends, by way of illustration I shall say a few words to the religions of the world. My faith lies in religion. If we are to judge by the present practices, they will all prove to be false, for the organization of religion has been at fault. All these things, I suppose, are the technique of the pursuit of power ; pursuit of

power and pursuit of goodness are two different things, and the pursuit of goodness has its own power. Therefore let us come together on the plane of morals and spirituality and not merely on the intellectual plane. There are many problems crying for solution from the religions of the world; for instance, women are not free, children are not happy, and more than that the domestic animals are not happy. They also belong to the greater humanity and therefore we must assure them of some comfort and peace. I suppose, especially in India, as Mahatma Gandhi has pointed out, the cow is not safe. The domestic animals that serve us ought to be served and protected. That is, I think, a part of the work of such a Parliament of Religions, which it ought to be able to do. What has religion to say on these matters? That is the question which the world is asking of this Parliament today. I suppose by coming together like this, and thinking together, we ought to find some solutions for these problems. I have done.

5. RABINDRA NATH TAGORE

Calcutta

FRIENDS,

When I was asked to address this distinguished gathering, I was naturally reluctant, for I do not know if I can be called religious in the current sense of the term, not claiming as my possession any particular idea of God, authorized by some time-honoured institution. If, in spite of all this, I have accepted this honour, it is only out of respect to the memory of the great saint with whose Centenary the present Parliament is associated. I venerate Paramahansa Deva because he, in an arid age of religious nihilism, proved the truth of our spiritual heritage by realizing it, because the largeness of his spirit could comprehend seemingly antagonistic modes of *sādhana*, and because the simplicity of his soul shames for all time the pomp and pedantry of pontiffs and pundits.

I have nothing new to tell you, no esoteric truth to propound to you. I am a mere poet, a lover of men and of creation. But

since love gives a certain insight, I may perhaps claim to have sometimes caught the hushed voice of humanity and felt its suppressed longing for the Infinite. I hope I do not belong to those, who, born in a prison-house, never have the good luck to know that it is a prison, who are blissfully unaware that the costliness of their furniture and profuseness of the provisions for their comfort act as invisible walls in a castle of vanity that rob them not only of their freedom but even of the desire for it.

The degree of this freedom is measured according to our realization of the Infinite whether in the outer world, or in the inner life. In a narrow room we may have as much space as is necessary for living and for the exercise of our muscles; the food may be more than sufficient, it may even be sumptuous; yet our inborn craving for what we may call the more, the unattained, if not altogether killed, remains unsatisfied. We are deprived of the Infinite, which is freedom of range, both in the outer world as well as in the ceaseless variety of the world of our experience.

But a more profoundly intimate perception of the Infinite lies in that intensity of our consciousness, which we can only attain when we realize ultimate value in some ideal of perfection, when in the realization of some fact of our life we become aware of an indefinable truth that immensely transcends it. We, in our human nature, have a hunger for *bhūmā*, for immensity, for something a great deal more than what we need immediately for the purposes of life. Men all through their history have been struggling to realize this truth according to the unfolding of their idea of the boundless, and have been gradually changing their methods and plans of existence, constantly meeting failures, but never owning final defeat.

We find that animals have their evolution along the line of the race. They have their individual life which ends with their death. But even in them there is a touch of the Infinite which urges them to outlive their own life in the life of the race, accepting sufferings and making sacrifices for its sake. The spirit of sacrifice in the parents is this touch of the Infinite—the motive power which makes the race life possible, which helps to develop

those faculties in them that will enable their descendants to find better opportunity for food and shelter.

But in human beings has been further evolved a sense of the Infinite that goes far beyond the struggle for physical life which merely occupies extended time and extended space. Man has realized that a life of perfection is not merely a life of extension, but one which has its selfless enjoyment of the great and the beautiful.

After we have evolved this sense of the beautiful, of the good, of something that we call truth,—which is deeper and larger than any number of facts,—we have come into an altogether different atmosphere from that wherein the animals and trees have their existence. But we have come into this higher realm only very lately.

Ages and ages have passed, dominated by the life of what we call the self, which is intent upon seeking food and shelter, and upon the perpetuation of the race. But there is a mysterious region waiting for its full recognition, which does not entirely acknowledge loyalty to physical claims. Its mystery constantly troubles us and we are not yet fully at ease in this region. We call it *spiritual*. That word is vague, only because we have not yet been able to realize its meaning completely.

We are groping in the dark, not yet clear in our idea of the ultimate meaning at the centre of this world. Nevertheless through the dim light which reaches us across the barriers of our physical existence, we seem to have a stronger faith in this spiritual life than in the physical. For even those who do not believe in the truth which we cannot define, but call by the name of spirit,—even they are obliged to behave as though they did believe it to be true, or at any rate, truer than the world which is evident to our senses. And so even they are often willing to accept death,—the termination of this physical life,—for the sake of the true, the good and the beautiful. This fact expresses man's deeper urge for freedom, for liberation of itself in the realm of the limitless where he realizes his relationship with the truth which relates him to the universe in a disinterested spirit of love.

When Buddha preached *maitri*—the relationship of harmony—not only with human beings but with all creation, did he not have this truth in his mind that our treatment of the world is wrong when we solely treat it as a fact which can be known and used for our own personal needs? Did he not feel that the true meaning of creation can be understood only through love because it is an eternal expression of love which waits for its answer from our soul emancipated from the bondage of self? This emancipation cannot be negative in character, for love can never lead to negation. The perfect freedom is in a perfect harmony of relationship and not in a mere severance of bondage. Freedom has no content, and therefore no meaning, where it has nothing but itself. The soul's emancipation is in the fulfilment of its relation to the central truth of everything that there is which is impossible to define because it comes at the end of all definitions.

The distinctive feature of materialism is the measurability of its outward expression, which is the same thing as the finiteness of its boundaries. And the disputes, civil and criminal, which have raged in the history of man, have mostly been over these same boundaries. To increase one's own bounds one has necessarily to encroach upon those of others. So, because the pride of Power is the pride of Quantity, pride of the mere number of its recruits and victims, the most powerful telescope, when pointed in the direction of Power, fails to reveal the shore of peace across the sea of blood.

Such is the tragedy that so often besets our history when this love of power, which is really the love of self, domineers over the religious life of man, for then the only means by which man could hope to set his spirit free, itself becomes the worst enemy of that freedom. Of all fetters those that falsely assume spiritual designations are the most difficult to break, and of all dungeons the most terrible are those invisible ones where men's souls are imprisoned in self-delusion bred by vanity. For, the undisguised pursuit of self has safety in its openness, like filth exposed to the sun and air. But the self-magnification, with its consequent thwarting of the best in man, that goes on unashamed when religion deadens into sectarianism is a perverse

form of worldliness under the mask of religion ; it constricts the heart into narrowness much more effectively than the cult of the world based upon material interests can ever do.

Let me try to answer the question as to what this *Spirit* is, for the winning of which all the great religions were brought into being.

The evening sky is revealed to us in its serene aspect of beauty though we know that from the fiery whirlpools which are the stars, chaotic outbursts clash against one another in a conflict of implacable fury. But *Īśāvāsyamidam sarvam*,—over and through it all there is spread a mysterious spirit of harmony, constantly modulating rebellious elements into creative unity evolving ineffable peace and beauty out of the incoherently battling combatants perpetually struggling to elbow out their neighbours into a turmoil of dissolution.

And this great harmony, this everlasting Yea,—this is Truth that bridges the dark abysses of time and space, reconciles contradictions, imparts perfect balance to the unstable. This all-pervading mystery is what we call spiritual in its essence. It is the human aspect of this truth which all great personalities have made their own in their lives and have offered to their fellow-beings in the name of various religions as means of peace and goodwill—as vehicles of beauty in behaviour, heroism in character, noble aspiration and achievement in all great civilizations.

But when these very religions travel far from their sacred sources, they lose their original dynamic vigour, and degenerate into the arrogance of piety, into an utter emptiness crammed with irrational habits and mechanical practices ; then is their spiritual inspiration befogged in the turbidity of sectarianism, then do they become the most obstinate obstruction that darkens our vision of human unity, piling up out of their accretions and refuse dead-weights of unreason across our path of progress,—till at length civilized life is compelled to free its education from the stifling coils of religious creeds. Such fratricidal aberrations, in the guise of spiritual excellence, have brought upon the name of God whom they profess to glorify, uglier discredit than honest and defiant atheism could ever have done.

The reason is, because sectarianism, like some voracious parasite, feeds upon the religion whose colour it assumes, exhausting it so that it knows not when its spirit is sucked dry. It utilizes the dead skin for its habitation, as a stronghold for its unholy instinct of fight, its pious vaingloriousness, fiercely contemptuous of its neighbours' articles of faith.

Sectarian votaries of a particular religion, when taken to task for the iniquitous dealings with their brethren which so deeply injure and insult humanity, immediately try to divert attention by glibly quoting noble texts from their own scriptures which preach love, justice, righteousness, and the divinity immanent in Man—ludicrously unconscious of the fact that those constitute the most damaging incrimination of their usual attitude of mind. In taking up the guardianship of their religion they allow, on the one hand, physical materialism to invade it by falsely giving eternal value to external practices, often of primitive origin ; and moral materialism on the other, by invoking sacred sanction for their forms of worship within the rigid enclosure of special privileges founded upon accident of birth, or conformity, irrespective of moral justification. Such debasement does not belong to any particular religion, but more or less to all religions, the records of whose impious activities are written in brothers' blood, and sealed with the indignities heaped upon them.

All through the course of human history it has become tragically evident that religions, whose mission is liberation of soul, have in some form or other ever been instrumental in shackling freedom of mind and even moral rights. The desecration of truth in unworthy hands—the truth which was meant to raise humanity morally and materially out of the dusky region of animality—is moreover followed by condign punishment, and thus we find that religious perversity is causing more blindness of reason and deadness of moral sensibility than any other deficiency in our education ; just as, the truth represented by science, when used for ignoble traffic, threatens us with annihilation. It has been the saddest experience of man to witness such violation of the highest products of civilization, to find the guardians of religion blessing the mailed fist of temporal power in its campaign

of wholesale massacre and consolidation of slavery, and science joining hands with the same relentless power in its murderous career of exploitation.

When we come to believe that we are in possession of our God because we belong to some particular sect, it gives us a complete sense of comfort to feel that God is no longer needed, except 'for breaking with the greater unction the skulls of people whose idea of God, fortunately or unfortunately, differs from our own in theoretical details. Having thus made provision for our God in some shadow-land of creed, we feel free to reserve all the space in the world of reality for ourselves,—ridding it of the wonder of the Infinite, making it as trivial as our own household furniture. Such unmitigated vulgarity only becomes possible when we have no doubt in our minds that we believe in God while our life ignores Him.

The pious man of sect is proud because he is confident of his right of possession of God. The man of devotion is meek because he is conscious of God's right of love over his life and soul. The object of our possession needs must become smaller than ourselves and, without acknowledging it in so many words, the bigoted sectarian nurses the implicit belief that God can be kept secured for himself and his fellows in a cage which is of their own make. In a similar manner the primitive races of men believe that their ceremonials have a magic influence upon their deities.

Thus every religion that begins as a liberating agency ends as a vast prison-house. Built on the renunciation of its founder, it becomes a possessive institution in the hands of its priests, and claiming to be universal, becomes an active centre of schism and strife. Like a sluggish stream the spirit of man is choked by rotting weeds and is divided into shallow slimy pools that are active only in releasing deadly mists of stupefaction. This mechanical spirit of tradition is essentially materialistic, it is blindly pious but not spiritual, obsessed by phantoms of unreason that haunt feeble minds with their ghastly mimicry of religion. This happens not only to mediocre individuals who hug the fetters that keep them irresponsible or craving for lurid unrealities, but

to generations of insipid races that have lost all emphasis of significance in themselves, having missed their present in their ghostly past!

Great souls, like Ramakrishna Paramahansa, have a comprehensive vision of Truth, they have the power to grasp the significance of each different form of the Reality that is one in all,—but the masses of believers are unable to reconcile the conflict of codes and commands. Their timid and shrunken imagination, instead of being liberated by the vision of the Infinite in religion, is held captive in bigotry and is tortured and exploited by priests and fanatics for uses hardly anticipated by those who originally received it.

Unfortunately, great teachers most often are surrounded by persons whose minds, lacking transparency of atmosphere, obscure and distort the ideas originating from the higher source. They feel a smug satisfaction when the picture of their master which they offer, shows features made somewhat in the pattern of their own personality. Consciously and unconsciously they reshape profound messages of wisdom in the mould of their own tortuous understanding, carefully modifying them into conventional platitudes in which they themselves find comfort and which satisfy the habit-ridden mentality of their own community. Lacking the sensitiveness of mind which is necessary for the enjoyment of truth in its unadulterated purity they exaggerate it in an attempt at megalomaniac enlargement according to their own insensate standard, which is as absurdly needless for its real appraisalment as it is derogatory to the dignity of its original messengers. The history of great men, because of their very greatness, ever runs the risk of being projected on to a wrong background of memory where it gets mixed up with elements that are crudely customary and therefore inertly accepted by the multitude.

I say to you: that if you are really lovers of Truth, then dare to seek it in its fulness, in all the infinite beauty of its majesty, but never be content to treasure up its vain symbols in miserly seclusion within the stony walls of conventions. Let us revere the great souls in the sublime simplicity of their spiritual altitude which is common to them all, where they meet in uni-

versal aspiration to set the spirit of man free from the bondage of his own individual ego, and of the ego of his race and of his creed ; but in that lowland of traditions, where religions challenge and refute each other's claims and dogmas, there a wise man must pass them by in doubt and dismay.

I do not mean to advocate a common church for mankind, a universal pattern to which every act of worship and aspiration must conform. The arrogant spirit of sectarianism which so often uses either active or passive, violent or subtle, methods of persecution, on the least provocation or without any, has to be reminded of the fact that religion, like poetry, is not a mere idea,—it is expression. The self-expression of God is in the variedness of creation ; and our attitude towards the Infinite must in its expression also have a variedness of individuality, ceaseless and unending. When a religion develops the ambition of imposing its doctrine on all mankind, it degrades itself into a tyranny and becomes a form of imperialism. This is why we find a ruthless method of fascism in religious matters prevailing in most parts of the world, trampling flat the expansion of the spirit of man under its insensitive heels.

The attempt to make the one religion which is their own, dominate all time and space, comes naturally to men addicted to sectarianism. This makes it offensive to them to be told that God is generous in His distribution of love, and His means of communication with men have not been restricted to a blind lane abruptly stopping at one narrow point of history. If humanity ever happens to be overwhelmed with the universal flood of a bigoted exclusiveness, then God will have to make provision for another Noah's Ark to save His creatures from the catastrophe of spiritual desolation.

What I plead for is a living recognition of the neglected truth that the reality of religion has its basis in the truth of Man's nature in its most intense and universal need and so must constantly be tested by it. Where it frustrates that need, and outrages its reason, it repudiates its own justification.

Let me conclude with a few lines from the great mystic poet

of medieval India, Kabir, whom I regard as one of the greatest spiritual geniuses of our land :

The jewel is lost in the mud, and all are seeking for it ;
Some look for it in the east, and some in the west ;
Some in the water and some amongst stones.
But the servant Kabir has appraised it at its true value,
And has wrapped it with care
In a corner of the mantle of his own heart.

6. SWAMI PARAMANANDA

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FRIENDS AND MY SPIRITUAL KINSMEN,

I have listened with a great deal of interest to the illuminating papers offered by the distinguished people not only of this country but of the world at large and naturally they are all thought-provoking. I will touch on only one thing which may be of practical value and utility. In travelling and in sitting together, I have heard it said that the world is a very bad place. Well, if it is a bad place, we also have our share in it. We live in it, we breathe in it and if we find undesirable elements, we must have the feeling to set it right. Sri Ramakrishna did this in practical reality and he is one amongst many such. He was modest and humble. He was not a scholar, but he was a practical idealist. He made a model, a model of perfection. That is the reason why we are all here today. There is not a single soul here that does not want to find perfection, and Sri Ramakrishna, with his sincerity of purpose, with his purity of life, with his concentrated devotion to the ideal, brought that into practical realization. We may look at it every morning, every noon and every night and as frequently as possible and see that our lives are moulded in accordance with that. I can say very frankly and honestly, by way of practical example, I have found in my own life that a life is transformed by a mere touch. It was my good fortune to see that. Instead of theorizing, let us do something

constructive as did Sri Ramakrishna. We are tired of theories. Who wants to be reminded that the world is a bad place? If you are lovers of humanity, instead of repeating this, come and give your helping hand. Let us hope that the fundamental principles which we touch during these sittings, we shall try to live. Those of us who know anything of the great life of Sri Ramakrishna, know that it is not through politics, not through science, not through any of these ingenious methods that he attained the spiritual vision. Through love, the golden thread that ties humanity, he attained truth. So let us forget the evil condition. I think the less we dwell upon it, the better for us. It will give us more strength. If we can do good to each other, I think we will achieve that for which Sri Ramakrishna and his disciple, Swami Vivekananda, gave themselves up without thinking of themselves. Thereby we shall get their blessings and benediction, and we shall find the joy and peace that we hanker after.

7. SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.

Chairman, Society for Promoting the Study of Religions, London

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN AND MY KINSMEN OF THE SPIRIT,

It is now my great privilege to address you just a very few words at the beginning, thanking you for this opportunity of saying something on the great occasion of this Parliament of Religions. I have travelled all the way from England to attend the Celebrations of the Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna because of the very great and deep regard which I have had for many years for the great work of Sri Ramakrishna. I was first drawn to him, because he, more than any other man, expounded the great yet simple principle of not merely tolerating other religions, but deeply appreciating them and penetratingly entering into them. I speak as a Christian, and what profoundly moved me was the way in which that great Saint entered into our Christian religion, entered into the very simple life and teachings of Christ. In a way we Christians were able to understand our own religion better by the way in which he had entered into it. I think you must

all remember the story of how when Sri Ramakrishna was shown the picture of the Madonna and the Child, he was so deeply impressed—he was very sensitive by nature—that he forthwith went into a trance. He saw that picture and by contemplating it, he realized not only the Fatherhood of God but also the Motherhood of God. And then you know, so the story says, he lived all by himself for six months, devoting all his time and all his concentrated attention, with all the intensity of his feeling, to entering into the spirit of Christ. That deeply moves us, Christians, because we feel that here was a Hindu, and although he was a Hindu of Hindus, yet at that time he did become a Christian of Christians. (Applause.) Not only has he affected the Christians, he has also affected the Mussulmans and the Buddhists. It is a very great and simple principle—here my view and your view also, I think, must be the same—that we of different religions should be brought together. We know from the long history of mankind that at the present time when there is so terrible an amount of disunion amongst us, it will be exceedingly good for men of spirit and men of religion to come together and meet together and see in what way they can bring into the life of the world that spirit of which Sri Ramakrishna was the apostle.

Now what I gather as the most important thing is that when we do meet together on occasions like this we get mutual help. We met together in the same fashion in London last year at the Congress of Faiths. Each one of us retained his own religion and each one of us was convinced—at any rate I was—that his own religion was the best ; yet by meeting one another, by spiritual contact with one another, we got inspiration to be better Hindus, better Mussulmans, better Buddhists, better Christians. We, each of us, were forced down to the very fundamentals of our faiths and each of us was made to aspire to the very highest ideals of his faith. That is a very, very important point. All mankind is very greatly indebted to Sri Ramakrishna for having spread and intensified this doctrine and lived up to it in his own life. In this doctrine we come across one great principle which is a very simple principle too, by which the whole universe is governed, and that is of the 'Unity in diversity.' The diversity

will always exist, and each one of us is different from the other as each particle in the universe is different from the other. We have to maintain our own individuality, but we should also realize that deep down there is this fundamental unity which unites us all.

Well, now, I would like to say just a few words and that is this. Great men like the Saint Sri Ramakrishna come into this world from time to time, and we humbler individuals have to make the most of this great privilege of knowing their worth, knowing their life, and we have to look to them and try to enter into their spirit, but we must not stop there. We must not be always looking into the past. As one of the speakers in the first greetings said, we are made up by our past, the present and the future. While we look to the past, we should look to the present and to the future also. We must realize that the future will entirely be of our own making and we must determine that the world of the future should be the better for our living in it. While we like Sri Ramakrishna, we look also far into the future and hope that there shall be men greater than even Sri Ramakrishna produced in the future. That is the message that I have to give you.

I would like to thank you most sincerely for giving me an opportunity to speak to you and I should like to express myself that when the second Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna is celebrated, we may look forward to greater men to arise. I thank you very sincerely for your attention this evening.

8. PROF. MUHAMMAD ALI SHIRAZI OF IRAN

University, Calcutta

FRIENDS,

I have been honoured by being asked to act as a Chairman of this Parliament convened under the auspices of the great Mission whose aim is to promulgate the teachings of a great Saint of Bengal, Sri Ramakrishna, a personality held in high esteem and honour all the world over.

I take this opportunity to tender my sincere greetings to the

Mission on behalf of my fatherland (Iran) whose great sons have much thought in common with those of India and even have exchanged ideas as far back as during the reign of Nushirawan.

Before I close today's morning session, I desire to give vent to my sincere feeling of joy at the success which this Mission will still further achieve in spreading the broad principles that it has taken upon itself to teach the world.

To me all the religions of the world are the effects of one Great Cause. All the religions of the world along with their branches endeavour to understand the mystery of the Omniscient One, the Truth, the Almighty Father, the Absolute Beauty and pursue the different paths to reach Him. So let every religious system of the world remain independent and let its growth remain spontaneous.

Since the very start of our existence, in this world, the objects of nature and the laws that govern them have been continuously forcing before our minds the great truth that there is one lofty and glorious Power that must be responsible for the perfect working of the whole universe. We are born with the consciousness of the Great Power, we develop the sense of His Existence and when we die, we die in the full knowledge of His Supreme Benevolence.

The poems of Hafiz, Maula Rum, Ommar Khyyam, Jami and many others are full of the idea that the whole universe, nay, the cosmos, clearly indicates that the Spirit of God is omnipresent, that He alone is Perfect Benevolence, Perfect Truth, Perfect Beauty, that love for Him is the true love.

Jami, the famous poet of Iran, says:

“ Now we call Thee the Wine, and now the Wine-cup,
Now we call Thee the Bait and now the Snare,
On the tablet of the universe is no letter save Thy Name,
By which name, then, shall we invoke Thee?”

Thus before we adopt any religion, we are already armed with the knowledge of His Existence and His Power. But according to circumstances we take up different paths to reach our goal.

I am a seeker after Truth and my path is the path of Islam

which means "Submission to the will of God,—the True and One God," and as such it has clearly indicated tolerance and absence of compulsion in religion.

If we examine the *Koran* (II.255), we find it clearly said:

"Let there be no violence or compulsion in religion. Truly the right way is manifestly distinguished from error. Whoever, therefore, shall deny whatever is worshipped besides God and believe in God, he shall surely take hold on a strong handle, which shall not break, and God is he who heareth and seeth."

9. DR. D. R. BHANDARKAR OF POONA

*Sometime Carmichael Professor of Ancient Indian History
and Culture, Calcutta University*

SPIRITUAL KINSMEN,

It is in the fitness of things that a Parliament of Religions of the World should be convened in India and in connection with the Celebrations of the Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. The most attractive feature of this teacher is the genuine spirit of research which he evinced throughout his life. He was a Śākta among the Śāktas, a Vaishṇava among the Vaishṇavas, a Moslem among the Moslems, and a Christian among the Christians. He allowed himself to come under the influence of even such modern teachers as Brahmananda Keshab Chāndra and Swami Dayananda Sarāsvatī. He having realized the goal of all faiths and creeds of the time, the truth dawned upon him: "The Lord is one, though He has many names;" "Religion is one. It has been so from all times, it shall be so for ever;" "Yea, every belief, every religion, every system of faith and worship is but a path that leadeth unto Him." This reminds us of Śākya Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, who went from one teacher to another, studying all sects and schools of thought, thoroughly and impartially, before the truth dawned upon him, before, in other words, he became Buddha, 'the Enlightened One.' His quest after truth extended over a period of six years,

during which he toiled and moiled, unflaggingly and unceasingly—physically, mentally and spiritually. Carlyle has said in one place, that genius is 'the transcendent capacity of taking trouble.' There has been no genius in the field of science who has not taken infinite pains in getting at the truth. Such is the case with religion also. This is the reason why the excellence of the truths discovered by Buddha and Sri Ramakrishna still bewitches us and dominates our mind.

But Buddha and Sri Ramakrishna were not the only two Indians who introduced the comparative method of study in the field of religion. This study of religion in a judicial frame of mind has, in fact, been the chief characteristic of the Indian's mind, to whatever religion he belonged. Who does not know Akbar, the Mogul Emperor, who flourished in the sixteenth century A. D.? Did he not set a noble example with his sympathetic endeavour to ascertain the truth in every religion? We know what delight he took in listening to and presiding over the debates of the Sufi, the Sunnite, the Shiite, the Brahmin, the Jaina, the Buddhist, the Christian, the Jew, the Sabian, the Zoroastrian and so forth. And we know with what mentality he approached the study of different religions. "He is truly a man," he often said, "who makes Justice his leader in the path of inquiry, and who culls from every sect whatever Reason approves of. Perchance in this way that lock whose key has been lost may be opened." Is this not, I ask you, one of the ideals which the Parliament of Religions has before it? And when Akbar invited the representatives of the various religions to his court and held religious discussions, was he not, in fact, holding a Parliament of Religions, the first of its kind?

But Akbar was not the only Emperor of India who studied religions in a scientific spirit. Long before him lived Aśoka, a Buddhist Emperor, who belonged to the Mauryan dynasty. He issued a number of edicts, which, being inscribed on rocks, have still been preserved for us. He perceived the fundamental unity of religions, and summed it up in the two words 'self-restraint' (*saṁyama*) and 'purity of heart' (*bhāva-suddhi*). But people, says he, are of various likings and various attachments. They

may display lavish liberality and firm devotion to their own sect, but not self-restraint and purity of heart, with the consequence that there is a communal clash. He therefore exhorts his people to cease praising one's own sect and decrying another's unnecessarily, but, on the contrary, to show reverence to other sects in all those respects where they deserve it. His advice therefore to mankind is: "Listen and desire to listen to one another's *Dharma*." The consequence of this course of action, says Aśoka will be that all sects shall be *bahuśruta*, that is, they will be possessed of much knowledge and information about *Dharma* and that they will also be *kalyāṇāgama*, that is, will conduce to the welfare of the world. There will thus arise, he further says, *Ātma-pāśaṁda-vadhi*, that is, 'the exaltation of one's own sect,' and *dharmasa dīpana*, that is, 'the illumination of Religion.' This is just what the Parliament of Religions is aiming at, namely, first that the followers of all religions should become *bahuśruta* or 'well-informed' by studying other religions dispassionately and scientifically, and secondly, that religions should promote the good of mankind. The first object is certainly being realized more and more, with every meeting of the Parliament of Religions, or of the World Fellowship of Faiths. How far the second object is being realized is somewhat doubtful. Supposing Aśoka and Akbar are come to life again and taken in an aeroplane all over Europe, what will be the condition of their mind? Their mind will doubtless be filled with wonder at the marvellous power over nature which man has obtained through science and has with its help killed both space and time. But what will their feeling be if they see with their own eyes the dreadnoughts, the submarines, the torpedoes, the mines and the long-range guns, the machine-guns, the tanks, the asphyxiating gases, the zeppelins and the like? Parliaments of Religions have no doubt broadcast the outlooks of the different religions so that we now know much more about them than we did fifty years ago. It is therefore my humble request to all the delegates and the representatives that are attending this Parliament that they should keep in mind the third object enunciated by the first Parliament in 1893, namely, "to bring the nations of the earth into a more friendly fellowship,

in the hope of securing permanent international peace." On the very first day of our meeting, a message from Mahatma Gandhi was read out which ran as follows: "Wish Parliament success. Wish it could do some constructive work." Let us see whether we can suggest any line of constructive work. Let us hope that the Rishis and Maharshis that have assembled here and are making this Parliament a success will do something to realize the third object of the Parliament of Religions.

10. MAHAMAHOPADHYAYA PROFESSOR PRAMATHANATH

TARKABHUSHAN

Hindu University, Benares

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Parliament of Religions is an unprecedented and wonderful event in the annals of India. We read of conventions of the sages held in the forests—the seat and centre of Indian culture in the Vedic, Smārtic or Paurāṇic times,—but no detailed historical accounts of them are available. History bears witness to at least three such big congregations held in Buddhistic India for discussing and determining the essential features of Religion.

The three Buddhistic synods differ from the present one. The Buddhist *śramanas* assembled together to discuss among themselves the tenets of their own religion, to collect ancient proverbs, sayings, poems and other writings, to compile in systematic book-form the materials so obtained and chalk out the future course for Buddhists. At that time communication between different parts of India was by no means free from dangers, and exchange of spiritual knowledge and experience was beset with difficulties that we hardly realize at present. The conditions have changed completely now. The distant parts of India, nay, of the world itself have been brought so close together that a message can be transmitted from one extremity of the earth to another in the twinkling of an eye. Distance and natural

barriers are no longer insurmountable obstacles. Fast, efficient and comfortable means of transport plying regularly by land, water and air have completely overcome the old obstacles. Add to these the facilities for exchange of thought among the civilized nations that English, French or German affords.

This Parliament, therefore, of the delegates of the different religions of the world under the auspices of the Centenary of the greatest sage of modern times, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, is remarkably fitted to illuminate the basic principles of all religions and to bind humanity in a common bond of spirituality, and of universal brotherhood.

A careful scrutiny of the course that the human mind at present follows under the influence of the wonderful discoveries and inventions of material science leaves us in doubt as to whether it is leading the human race to the desired goal—peace, happiness and loving fellowship. We see plainly that the alluring fruits of science in their immediate effect are intensifying distrust and division, strife and destructive zeal among the peoples of the world.

At this juncture, this great meeting of the thoughtful friends of humanity is most opportune, and is pregnant with potentialities for good, not only to India, but to the world at large, and it is certainly not too much to hope that this historic gathering of the wise and learned of all lands will be able to forge bonds of cordial fraternity, peace and love and make all the peoples feel that they form one Human Family.

In this unique atmosphere of hope the message of India is brief as it is ancient, and I trust that the good it will do will be as great as in the ages gone by.

This message was clearly uttered in the *mantras* of the *Rig-Veda*, the oldest Scripture in the library of mankind:

“The One alone exists though the sages call It variously.”
(I. 164. 46).

“What we see in and out of ourselves, all that has gone before and all that will be hereafter—all these are the Purusha, the Supreme Being. There is nothing except the Purusha”
(*Purusha-Sūkta*).

The contemplation of this Purusha or Ātman or the Reality existing behind endless diversity of experiences, is the vital thought of India. This meditation of the Purusha is the foundation, not only of the civilization, religion and spirituality of India, but it is also the very fundamental constituent of her temporal arts and sciences. From time immemorial hearing about the Ātman (*śravaṇa*), thought (*manana*) and constant meditation (*nididhyāsana*) on Him have been regarded as the most effective means of attainment of the final goal and highest good of life.

Nachiketas, the representative of India's youthful soul, in the ardent search for this ultimate Reality permeating through all apparent diversity, declined all boons offered to him by the God of Death, and humbly prayed:

" Let me be instructed in that knowledge which can remove the doubts that arise when a person is seen to die; for some say that with death the whole existence of the person comes to nothing, while others say that he still exists. This is the third of the boons I crave " (*Kaṭha Up.*, I. 20).

This knowledge of the Self or Ātman was the main subject of long-continued discussion among the Brahmins invited to the court of the Emperor Janaka of Videha in connection with a *rājasūya yajña* (sacrifice at assumption of regality). Here also we find Chākrāyana Ushasta asking the great sage Yājñavalkya:

" Explain to me clearly what you mean by saying that whatever is directly perceived is Brahman—the Soul of all, that which exists in everything " (*Bṛihad. Up.*, III.iv.1).

Yājñavalkya said in reply:

" He who by the upper vital force carries on respiration in your system, is your Ātman and is the Ātman of all beings. He it is, who, by the Apāna (the lower vital force) drives out the excreta. It is He, who, by the Vyāna (the pervasive vital force) works the functions of circulation and nerve-vibration, that is your Ātman and the Ātman of all. And at the time of death, He it is, who, by Udāna (the disjunctive vital force) sends the life out, that is your Ātman and the Ātman of all " (*Ibid.*).

This answer of Yājñavalkya did not satisfy Chākrāyāṇa Ushasta, who asked again:

" Knowledge is really imparted when the concrete object is shown to the pupil, for example, when a cow or a horse in front is shown and it is said—' Look here, this is a cow, this is a house.' Please instruct me similarly about what you call the directly-perceived Brahman and also the all-pervading Ātman. This is my humble prayer " (*Ibid.*, III.iv.2).

The sage replied:

" You cannot see the seer of the ocular perception, you cannot perceive by the ear the hearer of the auricular perception, you cannot understand the director of the mental faculties with the help of these faculties, you cannot know the knower of all knowledge by means of your knowledge " (*Ibid.*).

This seer of the seeing, this hearer of the hearing, this director of the mental activities and this knower of the knowing, this self-evident, eternal and ultimate Reality is your Ātman and the Ātman which pervades all; all other things besides this which you perceive with your senses are the sources of misery—they are transient and unsubstantial.

To understand the real nature of this Ātman, this Brahman or the all-pervading Soul, and thereby overcome all the miseries of the world the divine sage Nārada humbly approached Sanatkumāra who was well-versed in Ātmic knowledge and prayed:

" Sire, instruct me."

Sanatkumāra said:

" Let me know what you have already learnt, so that I may instruct you accordingly."

Nārada replied:

" Sire, I have studied *Ṛig-Veda*, *Yayur-Veda*, *Sama-Veda* and also the fourth, namely, *Atharvan* and the fifth Itihāsa (History) and Purāṇa (Antique Lore); I have studied the Veda of the Vedas (i.e., Grammar); I have studied treatises on obsequies; I know the Science of prognostications of terrestrial, supernatural and heavenly disturbances. I have studied Mineralogy, Logic,

Statecraft, Philology and Lexicography, Physics, Archery, Astronomy and Astrology, Snake-lore, Dancing, Music and other fine arts. All these have brought me knowledge, but I have not yet been able to know the Self. I have heard from sages like you, that it is only the knower of the Self who is emancipated from the bonds of worldly miseries. Take pity on me and lead me to the other side of this ocean of misery." (*Chhând. Up.*, VII.i.2).

Sanatkumāra said :

" All that you have learnt is very little—in fact a string of names only " (*Ibid.*, VII.i.3).

This hankering after that knowledge which culminates in enduring bliss and in the highest self-realization runs through all Indian works on Science, Arts and Literature, in some markedly and obviously, and in others in a subdued and submerged flow like that of the river Saraswati, but all directed, without deviation, to the same great ocean. The Vedas, the Vedāngas, the Purāṇas, the Itihāsas, in fact the whole of Indian Literature has been singing the same song in the same tune and the same measure from time immemorial ; and it is sure to prove a fruitless attempt on the part of anybody who wants to study and understand the inner life of India but whose ear cannot catch this tune and whose heart does not beat in unison therewith.

India earnestly prays in this great Parliament of Religions that every man may hear this message of her Soul, may understand it and try to live up to it. For human salvation lies this way, namely, in the realization of the all-pervading Ātman and not in the recognition of the gross perishable body as the Self of man.

Mistaking the body for the Self lies at the root of all wrongs from which humanity has so far suffered and shall suffer in future. This is responsible for creating insatiable sensuous desires in man, which again breed dissensions, distrust, enmity and all the ills and troubles that man is heir to in both his individual and corporate capacities. As fire cannot be put out by adding fuel but burns all the more fiercely, the insatiable sensuous desire of the heart only increases with fulfilment. This

is not the path of happiness ; it leads to world-wide pain and misery. Happiness, bliss and peace are attainable through introspection and renunciation, and by the annihilation of that ignorance which presents the gross body as the Self.

All the ways and means which lead to this bliss have been included in India in the term ' *dharma* ' or religion. India tried her best to bring home this fact to man and she has been doing so ever since.

To understand the achievement of India in the spiritual field, this aspect should be clearly understood. He who misses this, misses the true Indian spirit.

Neither by progeny nor by wealth can anyone escape from the clutches of death. It is only through the renunciation of the desire for fleeting pleasures of the senses that a man can attain immortality. This is the sum and substance of the teachings of the Hindu religion. It matters little if the inevitable differences due to clime, history and environment continue to exist among different groups of mankind regarding the ways and means for moulding life according to this light, so long as the central idea or the basic principle is not lost sight of. Rites and ceremonies are the outward form of religion. These may differ in different religions, but the eternal spirit of *dharma* in all ages and all climes has been this search after the Ātman or the Universal Spirit under different names and different conceptions. What is real and eternal will abide through eternity.

This Ultimate Truth was realized by Ramakrishna Paramahansa, as a result of unostentatious, simple, religious life and was the theme of his lifelong meditation. This conclusion is not new ; it is as old as the Hindu religion itself and yet is ever fresh, ever new for those who are inquisitive about the Self, those who would like to be shown the path of bliss.

In the *Bhagavad-Gītā* Śrī Kṛishṇa explained to Arjuna the same thing :

" As rivers from different directions flowing into the ocean which is ever full lose their entities and merge into it, so all

intellect. Such men only attain peace. Peace is not attainable to him who is full of desires for wealth, for love of woman and the other objects of sensuous pleasure" (II.70).

He, who can merge his conditioned and limited self into the all-pervading Universal Soul or Brahman is happy in this world, he is always contented and he can enjoy the bliss of the Self. Such a man only can be the friend of all, the servant of all.

This spiritual truth practically lived by Paramahansa Ramakrishna was proclaimed by the Upanishads which are the highest peaks of Indian thought and speculation. They declare with a clarion voice:

"What is unlimited is Bliss absolute, for there is no happiness in what is limited " (*Chhând. Up.*, VII.xxiii.1).

This is the ancient message that India gave to the world. This is the message which Ramakrishna has given to the world in a form intelligible and attractive to mankind.

And I offer my humble salutations and boundless reverence to this sage and saint of modern times who was the spiritual guide of Swami Vivekananda and the greatest teacher of Universal Religion.

II. MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU
Of Hyderabad (Deccan) and Bombay
 (*Opening Speech*)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I do not propose to make any speech at this moment. You must be very tired of speeches ; but at the end of the meeting I shall perhaps have a word or two to say. I am going only to give you greetings and to thank you and the organizers of this Parliament for thinking that I am worthy to conduct the proceedings of one entire session. As I said the other day, I am neither a priest, philosopher, nor a person of learning but only a humble wandering poet and if that constitutes a link to the one who sits in the high-place of the mighty who are learned and are experts in the ways of doctrine, dogmas and philosophy, I

am deeply honoured to be in that mighty place. Now I will call upon those who are really in the printed programme and not an after-thought like myself, to carry on the printed proceedings. First of all Professor Sarkar¹ is going to make an announcement and after that there will be messages and speeches and papers.

(Concluding Remarks)

I promised to speak for one minute. You have heard so many speeches on so many religions and amendments to religions, original religions and now and then challenges to religions. That is the work of those who are experts in the analysis of their own faiths or in the synthesis of their own creeds and their dogmas. A person like me who has no dogma, who follows no doctrine, and who dare not progress except in the step of the entire humanity, has nothing to say to you that has not already been said. The last speaker who claims to be like me a citizen of Bombay, has struck the last final note most splendidly. This Parliament of Religions is assembled not to find differences between faith and faith, but to find the co-ordinating deep unity. From the source, from the root, from the depths of the earth the water springs, but it goes into many channels, many rivers and many tributaries. From the womb of the earth the seed that has to give birth to other seeds makes a little tree and the tree grows and the branches spread and some bend downward, some go heavenward, some are twisted and some are straight. The branches that grow downward and offer shelter to the tired and the branches that grow heavenward, all are fed from the same root that springs from the heart of the earth, and shall any branch say, 'I am different'? The blossom is the same and the sap is the same in the spring-time and the spring-time makes no discrimination saying to the straight branch, 'Look, my beauty is given to you and not to the other branches,' and so we say that all faiths, all creeds, spring from the same source and that source is the need of humanity. I do not say it comes from God. I say it comes from our need of God. I

¹ A Secretary of the Parliament. See Introductory, pp. 4-6.

do not say that God created man ; I say man in his urgent and imperative necessity creates God every day and re-creates God every day. After all, what is God excepting our own individual consciousness of the Highest? What is God excepting the embodiment of our own needs of Beauty, of Truth, of Love, of Wisdom, of Courage?

In the garden of Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, there stands an empty temple made of stone and one day, when I was giving the Kamala Lectures to the University, the last day it was, I walked with him in his garden. He said to me, 'Have you found the text of today's address?' I said, 'No.' Then he said,

You will find the text of your address here.' I walked with him and looked at the birds, trees, statues and at last I stood before that empty temple, when he said, 'Poet, have you found your message?' I said, 'I have.' Here is an empty temple in which there is no image because every worshipper must find in the empty temple the knowledge that he creates God in the image of his own soul. That is the message to the world of all great saints and prophets of the world and that was the message of Sri Ramakrishna. For him the temple was always empty, because it was always ready. It was always ready for him to place his deity, no matter whether for a moment he projected himself into the soul of the Mussulman or the Christian or the Confucian or the Zoroastrian or the Sikh or any other faith. He said, 'Here is a temple of humanity and humanity must have a God. Where shall I find Him? Shall I produce Him in my limited individual consciousness? Or God shall be so infinite and so diverse that I shall seek Him in the image of the Infinite as He appears to His children in the deserts of Arabia, on the mountain-tops, in the caves and in the forests of many lands.' And Sri Ramakrishna taught us that the temple remains empty because love alone can create an image of God and with that love, you are not limited, you become a part of the great humanity that worship God by many names, and whether you say Alla-Ho-Akbar or whether you bow before the Fire Temples of the Zoroastrians, or you kneel before the Cross of the Christians or whether you go to the Granth-Sahib in Gurudwara, you realize

the oneness with them all and you realize that no one can set a limit to your humanity excepting the limitation of your own sympathies and understanding and readiness to receive. This is the only message that I can give you. Because it is the only message that has been taught to me as religion by my father. It is the only religion that I have found for myself affirming the teachings of my childhood, and thinking one day upon this unity amongst so many diversities, I was standing on the roof of my house in the Muslim city of Hyderabad and suddenly behind, from my house, I heard a voice of call to prayers, and almost immediately I heard from nearby, the chiming of the bells of a Hindu temple and not very far from me, there was a temple of Zoroaster where the Fire burns eternally,—the Fire that has never been quenched for a moment since the Zoroastrians came in the ships to India with the burning log and installed it in the Fire Temples, which has never been allowed to die,—and it came upon me suddenly, how marvellously privileged I was that I lived in a city where the temple and the mosque and the fire temple, all were together, so close together and so united in their worship, and I made a little song of the evening prayer, a call to the evening prayer and I will end with that prayer as my method and my benediction.

Alla-Ho-Akbar. . . .

Ahura-Mazda. . . .

Narayana. . . .

12. MADAME ADELINA DEL CARRIL DE GUIRALDES

Of Buenos Aires, Argentina (South America)

(Original in Spanish)

AMIGOS,

Me siento sumamente honrada por la distincion que hacéis al hacermé precidir esta magna y significativa asamblea. Mis méritos no son suficientes para ello y creedme que lo acepto más como atención a mi lejano país que a mi, la más humilde de sus representantes.

Hablaros de religión a vosotros que sois un país religioso por exelencia me parece hasta ridículo, nada tenemos que deciros de nuevo que vosotros no lo sepáis desde siglos atrás, por eso al consentir hablaros os dire la pequeña experiencia que vuestro Conocimiento ha dado a un grupo de gente de buena voluntad, de uno de los países más jóvenes de la Tierra.

Mis palabras de hoy serán casi las mismas que dije cuando el 16 de Setiembre pasado celebrámos el centenario de Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa en Buenos Aires, capital de la República Argentina, ocupando la tribuna Mme Sophia Wadia, y el Doctor Kalidas Nag, representantes por la India del P. E. N. Club, que en ese momento tenía lugar en esa ciudad además de nuestro bien-amado Swami Vijayananda de la Ramakrishna Mission, quién a nuestro pedido, ha ido allá para ofrecernos el maravilloso don de la Vedanta, la más antigua y más moderna de las filisofías, la enseñanza de todos los tiempos— porque fué vivida por los grandes Rishis que la enseñaron— filosofía que con su logica perfecta colma el pensar y el sentir de aquellos que tienen la ventura de trabar conocimiento con ella.

Todas las razas de la Tierra tienen sus Escrituras Sagradas que encierran las revelaciones recibidas directamente de la Divinidad por sus hombres mejores; aquellos que hicieron el esfuerzo de superarse para merecer este contacto sagrado. estas Escrituras contienen pues la Verdad que en su esencia es siempre Una y muestra al hombre el mismo camino de perfección.

Tambien todas ellas relatan la historia de la vida y enseñanzas de algun hombre en quien la Divinidad tomó cuerpo para dar a la raza un ejemplo viviente de la posibilidad del cumplimiento de tales enseñanzas, por cada ser humano.

El investigador descoso de instruirse tiene a mane estas Escrituras que los métodos modernos de difusión han puesto al alcance de cualquiera, pero esto no ha modificado a la humanidad, presa de las mismas pasiones a través de los tiempos. Dichas pasiones cubrieron y tergiversaron las Divinas enseñanzas que la Infinita Misericordia de Dios tantas y tan repetidas veces le dió, en diversas formas, según las necesidades del momento, en que se digno manifestarlas a sus hijos los hombres.

En la Bhagavad-Gita Sri Krishna dice a Arjuna, que aunque no teniendo principio ni fin nace por virtud de su poder sobrenatural siempre que languidece la justicia e impera triunfante la iniquidad, encarnándose así de edad en edad para proteger a los justos, abatir a los malvados y restaurar la verdadera Ley.

En igual forma que los hombres acuden a El, El los acoge, cualquiera que sea la senda que ellos sigan.

Muchos siglos después, en el principio del XIX nacía en la misma India y en una modesta aldea de Bengala, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, el hombre Dios que había de probar al mundo la verdad de esta aseveración; viviendo esta realidad magnífica de lógica: "En igual forma que los hombres acuden a mí yo los acojo a ellos; cualquiera que se a la senda que ellos sigan, aquella es la Mía." Y digo de magnífica lógica porque siendo Dios nuestro Padre y Creador, Señor Omnipotente, Omnipresente y Omnisapiente, al habernos creado a todos por igual sin imponernos especial forma de adoración, igualmente grata había de serle cualquiera que le dedicara nuestra sinceridad.

Pero para que los humanos pudieran incautarse de esta verdad, de nuevo "se dió nacimiento" y vivió en cuerpo de hombre, llevando a la práctica todas las formas de adoración por medio de las cuales llegó al éxtasis supremo; a sumergirse y diluirse en el océano de Su propia esencia.

Emocionante es el relato de su vida terrena; pasó la mejor parte de ella en la minuciosa y severa práctica de todas las religiones madres del mundo y sus numerosas sectas, sometién dose al mandato de sus más duras disciplinas, y todas sin excepcion, lo llevaron a la misma meta, al éxtasis, al más profundo samadhi. Por eso, en el total conocimiento de causa pudo dar Su mensaje universal a la humanidad entera: "Todas las religiones son verdad: distintos caminos que llevan a Dios si el practicante es sincero, puro y veraz: cualidades imprescindibles para llegar a El.

Este es el esencial significado de su mensaje cumplido en su vida y obra.

Sabiendo la tremenda tribulación que en un futuro cercano agitaría al mundo, el Todo Misericordioso vino a prepararlo a

enseñarle cuán equivocado es pelear y despedazarse en nombre del Dios-Uno, porque una es Su esencia aunque varios sean sus nombres o formas y obligado es cumplir la Divina enseñanza Su predecesor Jesús el Cristo, que trajo a los humanos Su divino mensaje de amor universal en la más sencilla de sus máximas: " Amarás a tu prójimo como a ti mismo " hermanando en ella a todos los hombres de todas las razas, clases y credos acordándoles a todos la misma importancia, la misma calidad.

Si aquellos que con tanto orgullo nos llamamos cristianos, cumpliéramos esta simple enseñanza de nuestro Divino Maestro, no cabrían en nosotros las diferencias las luchas, las guerras; y la paz reinaría en nuestros corazones.

El hombre moderno de Occidente olvidando el esencial precepto de amor del Cristo, sin cesar repetido a sus discípulos, buscó los más fútiles pretextos para eludirlo y poco a poco fué preparándonos nuestra actualidad desdichada, sumiéndose en el terrible caos del odio, desesperación, locura muerte.

Todo fué pretexto para separar y desunir, apesar de que los grandes acontecimientos de la actualidad le iban mostrando el camino de la unidad.

La ciencia llegaba a comprobar que sumergiéndose, profundamente en el estudio de la materia se llegaba al Espíritu de la materia—al Uno—y en la misma forma sumergiéndose en el estudio del Espíritu se llegaba a la materia del Espíritu—al Uno.

La abolición de la distancia no es más que un indicio de unión entre los hombres para que conociéndose mejor aprendan a amarse y comprenderse más.

Esto es lo que nos manda Dios, ese Dios—Uno a quien los hombres llamamos con nombres distintos, en la adquisición y conquista de fuerzas que hoy nos otorga con determinado propósito, y hasta hace poco nos guardó desconocidas y ocultas; pero nosotros olvidados del mandato de amor e ignorantes del " por qué, y para que " de estos dones, solo hacemos uso de ellos para nuestro propio exterminio.

La causa religiosa fué durante siglos motivo de pelea y guerra entre los hombres; por eso el reciente advenimiento de Sri Rama-

krishna con su mensaje de comprensión universal tiene tan gran importancia en este momento de incongruentes e inmotivadas divisiones.

Nuestra América libre y hospitalaria, no podía quedar indiferente a este mensaje cuya finalidad es la unión e todos los hombres en el Espíritu puro que no admite limites, fronteras ni divisiones; que no cambia adultera ni tergiversa ningún credo y que sólo pide a cada individuo que la practica, que cada religión sea respetada por los que profesan otra y que cada devoto sea el mejor practicante de la propia, siendo sincero, puro y veras.

Por eso nos encontramos reunidos aquí, para celebrar Su centenario, en esta ciudad en la que Sri Ramakrishna vivió, realizado en todas las ciudades impotantes del mundo Oriental y Occidental, por los hombres sinceros de todas las religiones, que El Practicó y honró por igual.

Por Su gracia infinita me encuentro hoy entre Vds, permitiéndome cumplir uno de los deseos más ardientes de mi vida: pisar el suelo de esta bendita Bhárata.

Tierra de Encarnaciones Divinas, Santos y sabios, y respirar su atmósfera de beatitud.

Gloria a Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa y mi sincero homenaje de carino y respeto para la India y sus hijos!

(English Rendering)

FRIENDS,

I feel it a great honour that you should have asked me to preside over this great and important assembly. I feel that I have not sufficient qualification to justify your choice, and that the tribute you are paying to me really goes to my distant country of which I am only a very humble representative.

It seems somewhat absurd that we should come to speak of religion to India which is the country of religion *par excellence*. We can tell you nothing which you have not known for centuries. But I may tell you of the small experience which your knowledge has given to a group of people of goodwill in one of the youngest nations of the world.

I should say here pretty much the same thing which I said on the 16th September last in Buenos Aires, the capital city of Argentine Republic, on the occasion of the Celebrations of the Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, when Mrs. Sophia Wadia and Dr. Kalidas Nag were in the chair. They came to represent India at the session of the P. E. N. Club which was then meeting in our country. I was speaking after our beloved Swami Vijayanda of the Ramakrishna Mission, who at our request came over there to bring us the marvellous gift of Vedānta embodying the truth of all times, which has been actually seen by the great Rishis who taught it, and which with its perfect logic satisfies the mind and the heart of those who have the good fortune to become acquainted with it.

All the races on the face of the earth have their own sacred scriptures which teach the revelation received direct from the Godhead by their most spiritual men, by those who made the effort of getting beyond and above their own selves to become worthy of that sacred intercourse. Those scriptures contain the truth which in its essence is always one, and which always shows man the way to perfection.

All those scriptures relate the life and the teachings of some men in whom the Godhead has become incarnated in order to show to the race, by a living proof, the possibility of the application of those teachings, by every human being.

The seeker has at his disposal those scriptures which modern methods of distribution have put within the reach of everybody ; but that has not reformed mankind, which has always been a prey to the same passions through all times. Those passions have hidden and distorted the Divine teachings which God's infinite mercy repeated over and over again, in the various forms, adapted to the needs of the hour.

In the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, Śrī Kṛishṇa tells Arjuna that although he has neither beginning nor end, he is born through his supernatural power everytime justice suffers and impurity obtains, that he incarnates himself from age to age to protect the just, strike the unjust and establish the true law.

Many centuries later, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, in the same land of India, in a poor hut in Bengal Sri Ramakrishna was born—the man-God whose mission it was to prove to the world the truth of that statement and to live that reality full of wonderful logic.

In whatever way men come to Him, He receives them—whatever may be the form in which they worship Him. I say it is a grand logic because since God is our Father and Creator, the Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient Lord, He has created all men equally, and has not imposed upon us any special form of worship, and the only important thing is that we should serve Him with sincerity and dedication.

But in order that mankind could realize that truth, He again took birth and lived in a human body, devoting himself to all the forms of adoration, and reaching through each one of them the supreme bliss, melting eventually into the ocean of his own essence.

The story of his earthly life is most moving. He spent the greater part of his life in the strict practice of all the great religions of the world and its numerous sects, submitting to the most severe disciplines which they prescribe. And every one of them without exception brought him to the same result, to the same ecstasy, to the highest *samādhi*. For that reason, with a full realization of the facts, he was able to give his universal message to the whole of mankind, "All religions are true; they are various paths each of which will lead to God if the aspirant is sincere and pure, and these qualities are indispensable if we are to reach Him."

Such is the essential meaning of his message as we read it in his life and in his words.

As he knew of the terrible ordeal through which the world would have to pass in a near future, the All-merciful came to teach him that God is one, because His essence is one, although His names and forms are many. And he fulfilled the divine teaching of his great predecessor, Jesus Christ, who had brought to men his divine message of universal love in the most beautiful

of his maxims, " Love thy neighbour as thyself." With those words he made brothers of all men of all races, classes or creeds, giving to each and every one of them the same importance, recognizing in him the same quality.

If those who so proudly call themselves Christians were to follow that simple teaching of our Divine Master, we should not find among ourselves all the strifes, the wars and the fights, and peace would reign in our hearts.

The modern man of the West, forgetting the essential precept of love tirelessly repeated by the Master to his disciples, took the most futile pretexts to evade that teaching, and little by little we came to the desperate situation, to this terrible chaos of hate, madness and death.

Every pretext was taken advantage of, which could separate and divide, although the great developments of the present situation have always shown us the way to unity.

Science has come to recognize that when we lose ourselves in its deep study of matter, we reach the spirit of matter, the One, and that in the same way when we lose ourselves in the deep study of the spirit, we reach the substance—matter of the spirit, the One.

The gradual disappearance of distances is nothing but an indication of the unity between men, so that knowing one another better, they may learn to love and understand one another better.

Such is the will of God, of the One God whom men call by many names. But we forget the teaching of love, we ignore the why and wherefore of those gifts, and we use them only for our own destruction.

Religions were for many centuries a cause of strife and war between men. That is why the recent coming of Sri Ramakrishna with his message of universal understanding has so much importance at this time of unnecessary and unjustified quarrels.

Our America, the land of freedom and hospitality, could not remain unresponsive to that message, the object of which is to unite all men in the pure spirit which admits of no frontiers,

barriers or divisions, which no creed can change or adulterate, which only asks each individual to practise, the ideal of which message is that each religion should be respected by those who follow other creeds, and that each devotee should strive to be the best exponent of his own religion, to be sincere, pure and true.

That is why we have gathered here to celebrate the Centenary in this city where Ramakrishna lived. And in all the important cities of the East and of the West many sincere seekers in all religions now realize that he preached and honoured them equally.

Through his infinite grace I am amongst you today. May he grant me adequate strength to fulfil one of my most ardent desires,—to tread the path of his blessed land, the land of Divine Incarnations, of saints and sages.

Glory unto Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, and my sincere tribute of affection and love for India and for her sons.

13. SRIMAT SWAMI BHAGAVATANANDAJI

Maṇḍaliśvara, Kāvya-Sāṃkhya-Yoga-Nyāya-Veda-Vedānta-Tirtha, Vedānta-Vāgiśa, Mīmāṃsā-Bhūṣaṇa, Vedaratna, Darśanāchārya, Benares

Original in Hindi

श्रीमत्परमहंसपरिवाजकाचार्य श्री १०८ युक्त

श्रीस्वामी भागवतानन्दजी मण्डलीश्वर

काव्य-साङ्ख्य-योग-न्याय-वेद-वेदान्ततीर्थ वेदान्तवागीश

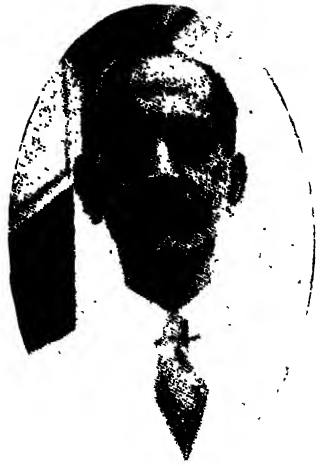
मीमांसा-भूषण वेदरत्न दर्शनाचार्य ।

‘नम ऋषिभ्यः पूर्वजैभ्यः पूर्वैभ्यः पथिकृद्भ्यः’ ऋग्वेद १०।१४।१५।, अथर्व वेद १८।२।२।

भद्रमहिलाओ ! तथा भद्र पुरुषो ! इस विश्वधर्मसम्मेलनमें जिन महात्माकी शताब्दीके उपलक्ष्यमें महोत्सव मनाया जा रहा है वे सन्न्यासियोंमें सर्वश्रेष्ठ थे ; केवल इतना ही नहीं, वे सब से बड़ी विभूति थे जिसको इस वर्तमान भारतने जन्म देकर अपनेको सर्वोच्च देश सिद्ध करनेका सौभाग्य प्राप्त किया है। उन



Prof. Muhammad Ali Shirazi



Prof. Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar



Mm. Prof. Pramathanath Tarkabhushan



Mrs. Sarojini Naidu



Madame Guiraldes



Srimat Swami Bhagavatanandaji



Dr. F. V. Tousek



Prof. A. B. Dhruva

महापुरुषके उपदेशोंने विश्वको आच्छादित करनेवाले अज्ञानरूप अन्धकारको दूर करके अविनाश प्रकाश फैलाया है। वे परमात्माके अवतार थे, क्योंकि गीतामें कहा गया है कि—

‘यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।

तत्त देवावगच्छत्वं मम तेजोऽशसम्भवम् ॥ गीता १०।८४१

जहां जहां विभूति दिखाई पड़ती है वह मेरा (भगवान्का) ही स्वरूप जानो। वास्तवमें यह सब जगत् ब्रह्मरूप ही है। इस भाववाले। ‘सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म’ (छा० उ० ३।१४।१) इस उपनिषदके वाक्यानुसार वे स्वयम् ब्रह्म थे, इसमें किसी प्रकारका भी सन्देह नहीं है।

उन्होंने संसारको यह शिक्षा दी है कि संसारमें रहो परन्तु इसमें आसक्त न हो, अनासक्त होकर संसारमें रहना हानिकर नहीं है। नौका जलमें रहे तो कोई हानि नहीं है परन्तु जलको नौकाके भीतर नहीं भरने देना चाहिये। इसी प्रकार हम संसारमें रहें तो कोई हानि नहीं है, विषय-वासनाओंको, विलासिताको अपने मनके भीतर नहीं घुसने देना चाहिये, हमें अनासक्त होकर रहना चाहिये, क्योंकि आसक्तिसे कामनाओंकी उत्पत्ति होती है और कामनाओंसे बन्धनकी प्राप्ति होती है। और कामनाओंका कोई अन्त भी नहीं है, जैसे कि विष्णुपुराणमें कहा है—

‘मनोरथानां न समाप्तिरस्ति’ (४।२।११६)।

और जैसे अग्निमें घृत काष्ठ आदिके डालनेसे अग्नि शान्त न होकर अधिक प्रज्वलित ही होती है वैसे ही भोगोंके भोगनेसे तृप्ति न होकर कामनायें और भी अधिक उत्पन्न होती हैं। कहा भी है—

‘न जातु कामः कामानामुपभोगेन शाम्यति ।

इविषा कृष्यावत्मेवं भूयएवाभिवर्धते’ (विष्णुपुराण ४।१०।२३,

मनुस्मृति, महाभारत)।

महर्षि व्यास अपने योगदर्शनके योगभाष्यमें कहते हैं कि—

‘भोगाभ्यासमनु विवर्धन्ते रागाः कौशलानि चेन्द्रियाणामिति, तस्मादनुपायः सुखस्य भोगाभ्यासः’ (२।१४)।

भोगोंका भोगना सुखका साधन नहीं है, भोगोंके भोगनेसे तो आसक्ति और भी अधिक बढ़ जाती है, भोगोंमें इन्द्रियोंका कौशल और भी अधिक वृद्धि प्राप्त हो जाता है।

उपनिषद्में कहा है—

‘यो वै भूमा तत्सखं, नाल्पे सखमस्ति, भूमैव सखम्’ (छा० उ० ७।२३।१)।

इन परिच्छिन्न असत्य पदार्थोंमें यथार्थ सख नहीं है, सच्चा आनन्द तो उस असीम भूमा (व्यापक ब्रह्म) के विचारमें ही है।

परमश्रद्धेय श्रीरामकृष्ण परमहंस प्रत्येक व्यक्तित्वे पहिले ईश्वरका अनुभव कर लेनेके लिये कहते थे। यही धर्मग्रन्थोंकी भी आज्ञा है जो हमें यह बतलाते हैं कि हमलोग इस संसारमें इन्द्रियजन्य भोगोंका सख प्राप्त करनेके लिये नहीं आये हैं किन्तु पूर्णता प्राप्त करनेके लिये आये हैं। ये महात्मा सब धर्मों और मतोंमें सुसम्बन्ध स्थापना करनेवाले थे, इनकी सब धर्मों और जातियोंके प्रतिसमबुद्धि थी। यह पवित्र विचार उमहीके लिये सम्भव हो सकता है जिसने पूर्णताको प्राप्त कर लिया है, और परतत्त्वको जान लिया है, और सब वस्तुओंमें ईश्वरको ही देखता है—यही सिद्धान्त वेदादिसच्छास्त्रानुमोदित है।

‘पुरुष एवेदं सर्व यद्रूपं यच्च भाव्यम्, (ऋग्वेद १०।६०।२, यजुर्वेद ३१।२),

‘इदं पूर्णं पुरुषेण’ (तै० आरण्यक १०।२०)।

यह भूत भविष्यत् वर्तमान जो भो जगत् है वह ब्रह्मरूप ही है। अतएव उनका यह उपदेश है कि मनुष्यकी सेवा करना ही ईश्वर-सेवा और ईश्वर-पूजा है, जीव ही शिव है। उनकी विचारधारामें मानवजातिकी सार्वदेशिक सामाजिक चारित्रिक नैतिक धार्मिक और आध्यात्मिक उन्नतिकी पर्याप्त उद्देश्यशक्ति विद्यमान है।

आजकल घृणा और लालचके कारण अनेक भेदोंमें विभक्त इस अशान्त संसारमें शान्ति और सुसम्बन्धकी स्थापना करनेके लिये इन महात्माके उपदेशोंसे बढ़कर और कोई वस्तु समर्थ नहीं है।

उन महापुरुषका यह सिद्धान्त था कि ‘यावन्ति मतानि तावन्तो मार्गाः’ जितने भी मत हैं वे सब उस प्रासङ्ग्य परमात्माकी प्राप्तिके मार्ग हैं। एक नदीके अनेक घाटोंमेंसे किसी घाट परसे भी पिपासु जल पीकर तृप्त हो सकता है, नदीमें चलनेवाली नौकाओंमेंसे किसी भी नौकापर चढ़कर यात्री पार हो सकता है, बाजारकी अनेक हलवाईयाँकी दूकानोंमेंसे किसी भी हलवाईकी दूकानसे मिष्ठान आदि लेकर खानेसे बुधा निवृत्त हो सकती है। वेदोंमें भी यही बतलाया है ‘एकं सद्भिप्राः बहुधा वदन्ति’ (ऋग्वेद १।१६४।४६)—बुद्धिमान् उपासक जन उस एक परमात्माको बहुत प्रकारसे कहते हैं। ये महापुरुष हमारे सच्चे पथप्रदर्शक थे, वे

आदय समन्वयवादी थे, वे सबको छली बनानेके इच्छुक थे, वे विश्वबन्धुत्वके प्रचारक थे ।

‘सर्वा आशा मम मित्रं भवन्तु’ (अथर्ववेद १६।१६।६), ‘मित्रस्याहं वक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे’ (यजुर्वेद ३६।१८) ।

सब संसार हमारा मित्र हो जाय, हम सबको मित्रकी प्रेममयी दृष्टिसे देखें, हमारे परमहंसदेव इस उदार भावके उपासक थे ।

सर्वेऽत्र सुखिनः सन्तु सर्वे सन्तुनिरामयाः ।

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिदुःखमाप्नुयात् ॥

—यही उनकी सदिच्छा थी ।

आज यहाँ इस सर्वधर्मसंमेलन परिषद्का होना उन्हीं महापुरुषके उदार उपदेश और प्रभावका फल है । मुझे पूर्ण विश्वास है कि ‘भद्रं नो अपि वातय मनः’ (श्रुग्वेद १०।२०।२०।१, सामवेद ४।६।४) इस वैदिक उपदेशानुसार हम इस संमेलनसे संस्मरणके रूपमें सद्बिचारोंको अपने जीवनका ध्येय बनानेका उपदेश लेकर अपने अपने स्थानोंको लौटेंगे ।

इति शम् ।

(Summary in English)

The great soul whose Centenary is being celebrated by this Parliament of Religions was foremost amongst *sannyāsins*, nay, he was the greatest soul that modern India has produced. His teachings have brought light to the world destroying the darkness of ignorance in which it was immersed. He was an Incarnation of the Supreme Being according to the *Gītā* which says, “What-ever being exists, great, prosperous or powerful, that know thou to be a product of a part of My splendour” (X.42).

He has taught us to be in the world but to be not of the world. “There is no harm if the boat is in the water but you should not allow the water to enter the boat.” So there is no harm if we live in the world but do not allow the world with its objects of enjoyment to enter us. We have to live non-attached, for attachment brings in desires which in their turn bring in

bondage. There is no end to desires and every one of us knows it for certain that there is no real Bliss in limited things. Real Bliss lies in the Infinite. Therefore Sri Ramakrishna asked every one to realize God first. This is also the behest of the scriptures which tell us that we have come into this world for attaining perfection and not for enjoying sense objects.

This great soul was a harmonizer of all faiths and creeds, and this synthesis is possible only for one who has attained the Highest, who has seen God in everything. Hence his teaching that to serve man is to serve God, for *jīva* is *Śiva*. In fact in his message of synthesis there is enough motive force for an all-round progress for humanity—social, ethical, religious and spiritual. Today nothing can work more for peace and harmony in this world which is divided by hatred and greed than the teachings of this great soul.

14. DR. F. V. TOUSEK OF PRAGUE

Consul for Czechoslovakia, Calcutta

In presiding at the last day's morning session of the Parliament of Religions, I propose to say a few words only. There have been speeches, profound studies of philosophy and religion and messages delivered by great personalities. I, a humble servant of my country, do not feel entitled to join the number of these distinguished thinkers in matters of such great philosophical and moral value. If I take the liberty to trespass on your time and patience, it is only to survey the results of the proceedings of this great Parliament.

Let us hope that the ideas brought forward in the proceedings of this Parliament will help us to deepen the mutual understanding between different religions, different nations and different races. Let us hope that the spirit of understanding will bring universal peace to mankind. Every noble work of peace should be welcome in the struggle for peace. This last struggle shall not change the ways of the world, but shall change the soul of man so as to enable him to understand freely that one man is equal to another

man ; that there is place in the world for every man who is honest and peaceful ; that everyone can follow his ideas in a peaceful way and that there is no necessity that one community should impose its will upon another community. The highest truth is the truth of freedom ; it is the right of everybody to participate in the highest achievements of spirit and science, to participate in the fruits of progress. This highest ideal can be achieved only by peaceful and spiritual means, through service to mankind—through self-sacrifice and education.

Every movement which has this noble aim of peace, has in itself the sacred mission and its advent must be hailed by mankind as the dawn of a new life. Such a spiritual movement must be universal. Everybody in his own religion, in his own culture, must contribute to this noble work of peace—must become a perfect creature so as to be able to carry forward the real truth of freedom and peace, without envy and without hatred.

If the Parliament of Religions would have produced nothing else than this spirit of mutual understanding, it would have accomplished its mission. I mention also the message¹ of Rabindranath Tagore as a great achievement. This message delivered by the venerable prophet, has made the greatest impression on me. I read it over and over again, and propose that his message should be translated into all languages and distributed in millions of leaflets throughout the world. "A mere poet, a lover of men and creation," as he has styled himself, has given us the real truth. Let us hope that it has not been delivered in vain.

The Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee could not celebrate better and in a more dignified way the birth Centenary of the great teacher and prophet. His teachings have been praised by more competent speakers. Allow me today to mention that my nation and thinkers throughout the world were celebrating yesterday the anniversary of the birth of another great teacher of truth, a philosopher and statesman, our first President, Dr. T. G. Masaryk. His love of truth led to his enunciation of the

¹ Presidential Address.

philosophy of realism, which became a guiding principle by which our people should seek regeneration.

The Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee, its President, its members and its General Secretary, and especially Professor B. K. Sarkar, have accomplished a great work in organizing this Parliament of Religions ; I congratulate them on this great success.

15. PROF. A. B. DHURVA OF AHMEDABAD

Hindu University, Benares

I am deeply grateful to you and to the organizers of this Parliament of Religions for the honour they have done me in asking me to occupy the Chair this afternoon. My confinement to bed for nearly two weeks in Benares shortly before now owing to flue has disabled me for discharging the duties of a Chairman on this great occasion, and I should have therefore preferred to remain a silent member of the audience enjoying the pleasure of listening to the ennobling and instructive speeches which have been delivered in this Hall for the last seven days. This pleasure, however, I was destined to forego owing to illness and unavoidable preoccupation which kept me at Benares during this period. I, therefore, crave your indulgence for reading before you a few scrappy remarks which do not pretend to be a learned discourse, but are intended as an humble tribute to the memory of the great sage of Dakshineswar, whose birth-centenary we are celebrating.

There is a singular appropriateness in holding a Parliament of Religions in honour of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

Sri Ramakrishna has taught the world both by life and by precept that all particular religions are avenues to the Temple of God and it matters nothing which of them you tread, provided you are really and sincerely religious. This means a great deal more than the exercise of Reason or Will or Emotion in the service of a higher life. Religion is experience, it is a consciousness (*sākshātkāra* or *aparokshānubhava*). Reason can enlighten life, morality can invigorate it, aestheticism can beautify it, but Religion alone can make it holy. Religion is not Theology or

application of Reason to the problems relating to God. It embraces the whole of life which it consecrates and realizes as a revelation of God in man.

Moreover, Religion is not a bouquet of select flowers culled from the plants of particular religions and bound together with the string of scholarship. Nor is it an attar of religious rose, jasmin and *kevada* pressed together and extracted as a single essence of a Universal Religion. As followers or admirers of Ramakrishna we believe in the synthesis of many religions as members of one family, meeting together around a common hearth and carrying on a homely talk—which is the root meaning of the word 'parliament.'

In addition to the 'holism' of Religion (I use the word in General Smut's sense) and *concrete unity* of religious thought which abhors abstractions, there are a few more characteristics of Ramakrishna's teaching which I should not omit to touch upon.

First is the *supremacy* of Religion. To use a metaphor which has been used by a Sanskrit poet in a different context, "*Devī-bhāvam gamitā parichārapadam katham bhajatyasha?*" "How can a queen who occupies the throne bear herself, degraded to the position of a page or servant girl?" In modern times, there is a marked tendency towards evaluating everything according to its utility. This utilitarian or pragmatic attitude is inconsistent with the intrinsic worth of life's highest categories, viz. Truth, Right and Beauty. Religion is not valuable only in so far as it preserves law and order in our social relations. Nor is it a hand-maid of politics—an instrument in the hands of shrewd politicians for managing ignorant masses. It is the form and substance of the highest type of life of which man is capable. Therefore, although I yield to none in my appreciation of the 'social services' which the Ramakrishna Mission is rendering in different parts of the country, I wish to stress the fact that Religion is the real power-house of the Ramakrishna Mission from which its social services should never be disconnected. The League of Nations, in my humble opinion, would have had a better chance of success, had it grown out of something deeper than economic and political interests of the several nations which compose it. What provided

unity among the warring nations of Europe in the middle ages? When the unifying force—the Christian Church—forgot the infinitude of God and became selfish, secular and bigoted, there came the fulfilment of the divine promise:

Yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānirbhavati Bhārata

Abhyutthānamadharmasya tadātmānam srijāmyaham

What is true of Europe is also true of India, *mutatis mutandis*.

Much of the bigotry, fanaticism and religious persecution in the world has risen from our dogmatizing about what we do not know or only partially know instead of acting upon what we do know and know clearly. While insisting upon a particular belief regarding the nature of God, we forget the ways which lead up to Him, although all the scriptures agree in declaring that the house of God has many mansions—"Sahasradvāraṁ jagamāgrahante" (*Rig-Veda*).

There is an interesting discourse on the relative importance of *sādhya* (the goal) and *sādhanā* (the paths) in the Buddhist *Tripiṭaka*. Gautama Buddha preached to his disciples: "Monks there is this other bank of the river. Suppose you called aloud a hundred times 'Oh bank! come to me,' would it come?" The monks replied, "No, Master." "In the same way," said Gautama, "no amount of calling upon the gods would bring the gods nearer. It is by building a boat, equipping it with oars and going into it and rowing it skilfully in the right direction that you reach your goal."

Let us not quarrel about the nature of God. We are all agreed about the right methods of reaching Him. Among them sectarianism, bigotry and intolerance have no place. To emphasize this truth was the mission of the Parliament of Religions.

Let me conclude this brief epilogue with the Vedic verse:

Parā hi me vimāṇyavaḥ patānti vasya ishtaye,

Vayo na vasati rūpa.

"In the evening of my life, Oh Lord, my thoughts fly to Thee in search of the highest good, as birds to their nests," or as another great book says,

"as a hart panteth for the water of the spring."

PART IV

**PARLIAMENT PAPERS AND SPEECHES:
THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD**

CHAPTER VII

SECTION I

The Ideas of Religion

RELIGION

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Religion from 're' 'back' and 'lego' to 'bind,' is meant to take man 'backward' to the source from which he came. His mind must circle 'backward' to the Divine Source, instead of moving 'forward' in the direction of the world.

The world's view as gained from the world itself, defiles the character of man, and so to redeem it the view must be taken through the Lord.

In order to find the Lord seated in the core of the heart within and have His company one must have recourse to a 'backward' journey through the prescribed process of religion. The process mentioned in the several scriptures—Hindu, Mohammedan and Christian—is the same. Yet nobody cares to get into the Temple of God to have His company. Man is in search of Him in the external world and the world misleads him, showing various figures of its own in representation of Him. And hence the rise of sectarianism. The Hindus are divided into many sects such as Śāktas, Śaivas and the like, the Mohammedans into Shias and Sunnis, and the Christians into Catholics and Protestants with their many sub-divisions.

Religion reveals the truth. It is one and the same for all, it comes through the scripture known as the word of God ; but vanity prevails, men have words of their own, they look at the face of religion in different lights, and see it in different ways. An attempt to arrive at a unity behind them all by mere scrutiny would fail in the long run and may ultimately lead even to the sect of communism which belongs to the anti-God society. One should attempt to discover and realize the inner meaning of the text of the several scriptures which embody one and the same principles.

If anyone has the inclination and desire to follow the

principles and teachings of the scriptures, he may go through the prescribed disciplines of religion.

The rituals and ceremonials observed in different religions and sects and believed to be the way to God, cannot, I think, be reconciled and harmonized. The true path of religion, however, is one and the same for all: the scriptures say—"Straight is the path of righteousness" (*Math. XIII*). That path is one and the same for all, let us attempt to tread it, and by that we shall be able to realize the universality of religion. And in following that way, we must have a guide. He should be of a spiritual nature—not a man who wears the garb of religion, though entertaining worldly views, and who mistakes the shell for the kernel. He should be a competent man *who has realized the presence of God in himself* and bears the marks of such realization in his inner and outer life. Spiritual guides of the past are all gone, but to him who seeks, such a guide will not be wanting in any age. For the Bible says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my father" (*John XIV. 12*), and the *Mahābhārata* indicates the path in the words:

*"Dharmasya tattvam nihitam guhāyām
Mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthah"*

i.e. "The secret of *dharma* lies hidden in the cave (of the heart). The path is that by which the great ones have gone ahead."

A herd of sheep is never left without a shepherd for its guide. Satan incites you from within, and you are so puffed up in vanity as to think of the guide in your own self. But if you are meek in conduct and believe in Him, search for Him and you will find Him.

NOTES ON RELIGIONS

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It is natural that European thought directed towards India is learning to adore this wonderful country as the cradle of

humanity, in so far as it has achieved a sublime synthesis of the human species. Consequently India is a symbol to us, which leads us to a solution of the highest and most profound problems of humanity envisaged by the religions of the civilized world.

The eternal source of religions is the inner depths of the individual soul, but their "*conditio sine qua non*" is the external expression of our collective life.

That is why the religions no less than all other phenomena of the "material" world, characterized by the individual and the society as the two inevitable poles of every known form of existence never cease their struggles in spite of the moral role they have to play as apostles of peace.

Consequently, the image of the life of humanity—so sombre in spite of the divine ideals included in it—seems to be derived from a wrong human conception of God, of life or of both. For a single individual life, even the most modest one, contemplated in the manner no less proper to it than to every other natural phenomenon seems to be more than all the "known" miracles wrought by the supersensibility of or invention by the whole humanity.

It is evident that the mental predisposition of our times attributes a preponderance to the human mass degrading at the same time the value and the role of individuals. A similar process, but never so universal and formidable, is well known in the history of humanity: it characterizes the epochs of revolutionary upheavals, of which it is the most distinguishing feature. Only by preserving a true appreciation of values is it possible not to forget that all this will be changed again when the social equilibrium will be re-established. But what are the inevitable consequences of a similar situation in what concerns us here?

Above all, doubtless, one of the inevitable consequences will be a diminution of the role of "machine"—the panacea of every human race—which is going to give place more and more to the spirit of the individuals—the true masters of humanity, who will try to convince them, as was always the case in the world, that the perfect man is but the most faithful image of God. But

unfortunately—as we too prophesy it—neither will it be possible to reduce the role of the machine to the level desired and dictated by that perfection, nor will it be possible for this perfection—the crown of all human efforts—to endure uninterruptedly, particularly in the midst of vital circumstances incompatible with spiritual life.

These “circumstances” are primarily the barbaric ignorance of the human masses, cultivated by their misery and closely related to their formidable numerical preponderance, surpassing all the known means of civilized existence. It is the superfluous part of the body which has been always and everywhere the principal source of the evils oppressing everything that exists on the earth.

The problem of religions, attacked from this point of view, permits us to elaborate the conception of their essence and their role up to the point of conceiving them as “man’s sense of responsibility towards his own existence.”

There are in the world neither individuals nor human societies altogether devoid of a similar sentiment. It goes without saying that even “pure atheism” may be regarded as a simplification of the religious cult, particularly where it is organized and protected by the powers in an almost ecclesiastical manner for the benefit of the masses who were treated differently in the “machines” in the course of their long past but equally contrary to the heaven of ideal-creatures of pure civilization—the true grace of God.

Unfortunately the world today is menaced by an unprecedented and universal multiplication of the brute forces of human masses. We know it is an effect of the revolution caused by the World War and we know also that its antidote is that the civilized world should at all costs abstain from new upheavals—at least up to the time when the role of the human individual and of his religious soul is again firmly established for the benefit of humanity.

THE RHYTHM OF SACRIFICE AND THE RHYTHM OF PRAYER

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The object of this study is to trace by comparative and historical methods the development of religious life, and to determine its successive phases in its most characteristic expression, viz. the sacrifice. We have had occasion to show elsewhere¹ that the sacrifice, the psychological synthesis of interest and disinterestedness, of initial aesthetic activity and derived technical activity, transformed the very essence of life. The law of life, in fact, instead of being a linear evolution, is a law of equilibrium between two opposite tendencies—between the energies of spiritual and material nature. It is a constant oscillation between a *hyper-function* and a *hypo-function*, between a *hypertony* and a *hypotony* meaning the respective causes of the two possibilities of inverse disequilibrium, be it through excess or absence thereof. This is the source of a rhythmic cycle of three stages, viz.—evolution, i.e. *élan* for spiritual evolution of expansion; revolution, i.e. material lowering down in the inverse sense; final reaction, i.e. return towards the higher source—*conversion* towards the principle. This is the general process of the transformation of all energies.

Now it is this rhythm which we shall try to apply here to religious life, by briefly sketching a more detailed and precise schematic survey given in a previous work.² The historical study of the sacrifice in the true sense has to be scrutinized and com-dialectic importance: it permits us to actually come in touch with the divine ordinance itself, and its actual appearance in the universe. But it is the inescapable precondition that the history of the sacrifice, as has been demonstrated there, has considerable pared and that no mistake is committed regarding the nature of initial sacrifice. Now on this point the sociological school of Durkheim gave a wrong lead. This school was fascinated by the

¹ Cf. *La Dialectique et le rythme de l'Univers*, Vol. I.

² *La Cité humaine*, tome II, p. 73.

sacrificial rite of the *intichiuma* in Australian totemism, and it put implicit faith in the admissions of these degenerate savages as if they were really primitive. As a rule, all the systems of the evolutionists, based on the primitive character of totemism and totemistic sacrifice are vitiated by common error: they take the period of the descending movement and the point of departure for a conversion to be an absolute commencement which, in fact, is the culminating point in a movement, or rather a turning point in the course of its development.

Let us give at first a brief sketch of the rhythm of sacrifice. Its theory is above all determined by the distinction between *religious* sacrifice and *magical* sacrifice. The former implies that the individual intends to exercise a constraint on the divine forces, but the latter infuses the inverse attitude of submission and offering. This distinction once defined, one may say that the theoreticians oscillate between these two antagonistic positions, viz. that the history of the sacrifice is derived from the offering for constraint and that it is derived from the constraint for offering. The former position, accepted by Lang Schmidt and Lagrange, defines theological spiritualism, while the other accepted by the school of Spencer, evolutionary naturalism. There is, however, a third position which is different from the two preceding ones or rather reconciles them: it is the position from which Robertson Smith has developed his system of *Sacrifice of Communion*.

Now again, it has to be pointed out that the truth is to be found in the historical succession of these three points of view, and not in their exclusive acceptance. They are the three distinct phases of one and the same development. When they are investigated impartially, the facts show that the primitive sacrifice is always an offering—under one aspect or another it is a sacrifice of the firstlings. The sentiment which inspires it, is that the materials should never be used without some reserve; for it becomes only an absolute master who has himself produced them to sacrifice them without such reserve. It should not be forgotten that their true creator is God, and therefore it is equitable to offer Him the first fruit, which it has been permitted to us to gather, in gratitude for this first gift. The sacrifice of man thus appears to

be the exact counterpart of the creative work of God. The nomadic Arabs, who from this point of view seem to be much nearer to the original state of things than the Australian Aruntas, perform a sacrifice of this type.

But gradually the sense of sacrifice as an institution changed. The aesthetic disinterestedness was succeeded by interested technique. By an analogous degeneration the antique sacrifice of offering became a sort of contractual pact. It is the *do ut des*, the theme of utility. The object sacrificed is simply destroyed, but it serves to renovate the energy of God so that He may rush to succour in the moments of periodic decline. One step more and this sacrifice, still of religious procession, is inverted into a magical sacrifice of downfall. It is here that the contract is transformed into constraint, and it is God who appears before man as if under compulsion. In reality, however, the magical attitude has but precipitated humanity into the abyss of inversion and evil. Imagining that he is binding down God, man himself is bound down by the spirit of hatred. And he has to pay for it by a progressive recrudescence of barbarism and the widening of the distance from the source of life and civilization. The path of existence has certainly to be converted by a return to the divine and primordial principle. The theme of the final participation becomes the synthesis of two opposite tendencies, viz. the return of man towards divinity, and divinity on its side coming to meet man to regenerate him.

It is this last stage which is expressed by the communal sacrifice—the ritual repast in which the individual renounces the pursuit of his own individualization and derives from this ritual union a new sap and new energies. The significance of this surrender to the expansive mood of divine life is gradually realized in human civilization. But to be able to enter the state of communion with the supreme essence, the man who has been contaminated even for a moment by the powers of evil has to undergo a preliminary purification. The banquet of communion too has to be preceded by purificatory rites. Only on this condition the divinity will lower itself to the level of the man and even reclaim him by its forgiveness. This forgiveness, however, is a

sacrifice on the part of the divinity, because it is renouncing a right—the remission of a sacred debt, that is how the last phase of the sacrifice still implies a sort of dull rhythm—sacrifice of God, expiatory sacrifice and final sacrifice of communion. It is by virtue of this synthesis that the process of redemption is realized.

Now where should we place, in this development of the sacrificial rite, the famous totemic sacrifice of the school of Durkheim? The truth is that at the critical point of religious existence, procession, degeneration and conversion take place at one and the same time. Hence the ambiguity of notion and the possibility of interpretation in diametrically opposite directions. But we are not going to press this point here any more. It suffices for our purpose to show that the offering of monotheistic spiritualism preceded the contractual sacrifices of naturalistic polytheism, and that the rhythm attained communion with a divinity impregnated this time with nature, divine spirit and materiality, soul and the body. The final sacrifice has divinized humanity, at the same time that it has humanized divinity. Through it the religious life has reached its end: man has learned the true sense of his existence and destiny; he has learned the great law of renunciation which would be the highest source of social life, the germ which will develop afterwards into law and morality, by a differentiation followed afterwards by a correlative integration.

In this sense the science of religions is far from possessing the character of artificial simplicity which the partisans of the systems of unilinear evolution have been prone to attribute to it. As its object obeys rhythmic law of development, the two phases of rhythm are easily subjected to facile confusions. To separate them clearly is the task of historical criticism: above all, the decline of one organism must not be confounded with the initial stage of the symmetrical organism, and in the sacrifice, particularly the centre of all life, it is necessary to carefully separate the descending branch from the ascending one—the one heading towards magic, and the other towards religion. Now that we have thus cleared our path, we can sketch more accurately the tendency of the last epoch and the real importance of the religious sacrifice of conversion. It is on this point that we are going to lay particular stress.

Let us envisage successively the three stages of sacrificial rhythm. At first, as the inverse of what happened in the magical thing, the idea of the voluntary consent of the victim to immolation for God was manifested at a very early date. For the purpose of not alienating the good wishes of God, as remarks Grant Allen, it was felt that the sacrifice must be voluntary or at least it should appear as such.

This result was obtained by the most various artifices and fictions; in extreme cases it was even sufficient only to buy the victim legally. Sometimes those who killed it were in mourning, and sought excuses by which to divest themselves of the responsibility for the immolation, or even accepted fictitious punishments.

Thus the rite of *intichiuma* seems to provide, from this point of view, the spontaneous character of the divine oblation: this is the purpose of the "Presentation" of God to the chief of the clan—to Alatunja who in this connection seems to take his place. In fact, the Alatunja, who is the sacrificer, refrains from active participation in the hunting or the skinning of the totemic divinity. It is the young people of the clan who are charged with these tasks, and they afterwards offer the chief specimens of a sacred character which would be the material of the sacrifice.

In the religions of the civilized world the artifice changes only in form; in the sacrifice of Zeus Polieus at the time of the festivity of Dipolia, the bull which has eaten the sacred cake is violently struck by the priest with a hatchet. But when the act is over, the latter throws away the hatchet precipitately and flies away like a criminal. Then follows a judgment in which it is decided that the hatchet alone is guilty. This judgment which exculpates the faithful, if not able to give the rite a religious character, at least serves to relieve its character of magical constraint: it may be called a negative rite of conversion. Moreover, there is a further justification by prayers: the sacrifice of Soma in the Vedic ritual is a curious example of it. When the ceremony is finished and the sacrificer, by the pressing of this divine plant, has inclined towards it his principle of life, and compels himself to give it to it and unable to restore it materially, he prays to it by oral rite: "If, Oh God Soma, they have cut your tender limbs

with the pressing stone, speak again, and free from sin we might live together. . . . If, taken away from your place of birth, you pine for it still, then by your favour, Oh Soma, may this sin remain secret, such be our alliance with the supreme heaven."

Nothing remains of the crime committed. The man tries to prove that he is not voluntarily taking the side of God, and that the spontaneity of the sacrifice goes to the God alone. Moreover, it is the justification by tears. Thus in the "passion" of Osiris, which preceded His Resurrection, the faithful ones for four days weep for the death of their God; but the news of His resurrection will be received afterwards with great joy. The same was the case also with the death of Attis and of Adonis in all these cults of the Orient in general, the progressive introduction of which into the Roman world was to prepare the spirit for an easier conversion towards the unique God. It is for this reason that at the moment when anthropotheism attained its apogee in Rome with the divinization of the emperors, it was felt that a new age was going to dawn and that the imperial cult was counter-balanced in the human mind by the inverse tendencies of the conversion. Religious homage was paid to the divinities of the Orient, Egypt or Phrygia, and popular sentiment soon insisted on their official recognition by the empire. Now in this orientalized Rome, which in every respect marked the ultimate limit of human power and which at the same time was the pivot of the universe, the apotheosis of the procession and the radiating point of the conversion, human activity entered into contact with the new God. The cult of this God, it is true, had its origin in the Orient, but here He manifested His real existence and here began His real development in history.

From this point of view the vital rhythm of the organism,—the divine sacrifice, inducing as its natural correlative the expiatory sacrifice of the creation, and achieving by a mutual conciliation of both, ends the final act of the sacrifice of the communion. This is the history of the development of the idea of redemption—the God conquering the evil by the grace of His sacrifice. The expiatory sacrifice of which we have already noted the magical equivalent, is the second act of the redemptory process. Its

purpose was to raise man again to the divine source by taking hold of him in the low tenebrous depths of the procession of the decline and by this progressive elevation to bring him in contact with the creative power which on its part also lowers itself to him. In this way it introduces into the field of religious activity a large group of new ideas such as the ideas of purity and impurity, scarcity and repurchase—corollaries to the general duality of good and evil.

It is well known how much confusion and obscurity has been created in the science of religion by the famous theory of Taboo. Supporting themselves by the ambiguity of the notion of the sacred, of which quite opposite aspects have been insisted on by the linguists and sociologists, was it not claimed by its partisans that this was the origin of all religious forms—an undifferentiated state of conscience in which the sacred and the impure are confounded in a common acceptance? Evolution consists precisely in the dissociation of these two characters, and at the same time also in the increasing rupture of the first associations, between sin and expiation, and between moral scruple and crime against God.

Let us remember the difficulty as well as the limits of the problem; as a matter of course the enquiry is started with the lower forms of society which are considered to be absolutely primitive. The religious forces in them are of two kinds. Some are benefactory and connected with order and with life, inspiring respect and veneration; they are sacred by nature as also the persons and the things participating in their virtues. The others, on the contrary, bad and impure, are causes of malady and death and give birth to fear and horror; they emanate from the *cadavres* or the spirits of the dead and of all the evil genii from whom the sorcerers draw their strength. These two kinds of forces are absolutely antagonistic to each other and the religious life of man oscillates between these two extreme poles. These two inverse modalities, however, join each other under a different aspect. Both of them are equally dangerous and equally *interdicted to the profane*. In this respect both of them belong to the common category of the sacred.

But now there is something which is infinitely more bizarre.

These two categories of forces are transferable from one to the other without changing their nature and by a simple modification of the external circumstances. Thus the soul of the dead becomes the tutelary genius ; the *cadavre* which at first produces terror, becomes a venerated relic from the end of the period of the mourning. The same power which was an agency of pollution now becomes sanctifying. Has it not to be concluded, therefore, with Durkheim that the pure and the impure are not two things separate, but two varieties of one and the same species comprising all sacred things? There are two kinds of the sacred, and not only there is no solution of continuity from one to the other, but one and the same object may change from one to the other without changing its nature. The pure mix with the impure and *vice versa*. The ambiguity of the sacred consists in the possibility of these transmutations (Durkheim). This explains the double meaning of the Latin word '*Sacer*' and Greek '*Hosios*,' each of which expressed both 'good' and 'evil' and served to designate in a general way all that has been surrendered to the divinity, but precisely, the fact of sacrificing to the infernal powers by the individual comported necessarily the ordinary consequences of magic. In other words liberty in it had to be replaced by necessity, and the spontaneity of the sacrifice by a pact of compulsion which binds down the two contracting parties. He who is inclined towards evil and has sacrificed a life to the powers inimical to life for the purpose of binding them down to his purpose or to his desires, is himself bound down on his part by virtue of the magical contract; he is the prisoner of the Gods whom he tried to subjugate by his sacrifice. It is the *do ut des*, the compelling force which gains in strength with every crime, and which places him in contact with the powers of evil and death. Thus there would be no way for him to regain the possibility of life than by "detaching" himself through "desecration,"—that is to say etymologically, through expiation. The Greek word '*Hosios*' meaning 'sacred,' '*aphosioun*' would exactly express 'desecrating,' but the Latin translates the word by '*xpiare*.' And as the accused had been declared *Sacer* and therefore surrendered to the powers of chastisement, physical punishment alone, that is

to say, the effusion of his own blood or of his principle of life, could have the power of dissociating or absolving him.

All this is quite clear. The ambiguity of the sacred in which Robertson Smith saw one of the main difficulties of the sacrifice: the absolute crime is the inverse of the absolute sanctity; but both are sacred, one in the magical and the other in the religious sense. The central idea of expiation is to break off the magical fact and to untie the bonds imposed by the crime. The expiation, however, is also a purification; for we are in fact in a world of degeneration, which after the fashion of *renouvier* might be called the second world.

The condition of the liberation was thus a conciliatory attitude. The debt has given you over to the powers of revenge, and one would be liberated from one's connection with them to the degree in which one would dissociate oneself. We are now in a position to understand the religious theories which in the manner of Salomon Reinach try to explain, for instance, Christian sacrifice by the theme of the substitution of victims. If it is true that this principle has led to customs like those of the emissary goat or the sacrifice in effigy, it cannot be invoked to explain the Christian redemption. In the first case it is a purely magical thing of the transfer of the properties and qualities from one individual to another,—a transfer imposed by the man under the action of a formula or a spell—and in the second, it is the voluntary redemption—the rich person who spontaneously offers to pay the debt of the poor and to liberate him thus from all juridical punishment.

This is the meaning of the expiatory sacrifice: the return of man towards the purer region of the saintly and the sacred—an ascension correlative to a descent, the descent of God towards the world of evil and decline. This double process like all other things of the world has had a historical development: in the matter of procession it comes from the spirit to matter. But in the case of conversion it goes up to life from matter. Under the first aspect it is the divine incarnation,—God made man and become material sacrifices materially for his creatures. But divine matter, divine body, is already pure matter far above the corporeal matter of humanity. Thus man too, in order to enter into contact with it,

must undergo first of all a material purification, and Christianity in this point continuing and completing the task of conversion which was formed already in the pastoral cults, naturally incorporates also their purificatory rites. It was natural to paganism in so far as the embryo of the new religion was already in existence in it and this was revealed later more manifestly by the opposition of the pure and the impure, and of sin and absolution. It was the centre of all the oriental mysteries which gravitated more or less towards the Persian dualism of the *Avesta*. Was it not also, in a general way, the characteristic of the human spirit itself at the moment it started on its career towards conversion? At this stage of the development of the activity all the techniques can never be more than mere techniques of redemption and of purification, and they transmit this state of the instability of the conscience shared between the pure and the impure, between the defilement by the evil and the effort to efface it, between the sin and the expiation. And now if we approach critically nearer and nearer, do we not perceive the primitives of ethnology, like those of history, obsessed continually with the fear of impurity? Among these people, whose religion of the totem already marked an important place in the spiritual development at the point of triple intersection of procession, degeneration and conversion, the notion of ritual purity is the pivot of the whole existence. Would it not be said that at every step every thing is taboo and that life was passed in a perpetual torment and a continual nightmare and in the unnatural fear of pollution? In order to find a state of mind less uneasy it is necessary to reascend the degrees of life. Then the sentiment of redemption gradually pacifies the soul of man, the pure and the holy affirm their superiority over the impure, and the man tormented by remorse and scruples finally finds repose in the consoling certitude that an infinite purificatory power intervenes to save him from pollution and crime. More than all the material rites, it effects his salvation more certainly, for it adds the reality of the divine action to the reality of the human. The sacrificial process is now complete. Far from being a point of culmination as was suggested by religious evolutionism, the thing of sacrifice as we have seen, is rather the point of depar-

ture for a new development. But at this point of departure, the human aspect after a procession or rather a decline, was sure to reappear soon. Thus the theories of progress and decadence are united in a synthetic conciliation of the doctrines, and this historical synthesis of the opposites is very well the final point of view of life—the theme of all adaptation. In course of its last ascendant phase the sacrifice is spiritualized by degrees: “God is the spirit, and therefore only those who adore Him spiritually are His true adorers.” The religious conscience too, following the order of the procession of beings, naturally tends to attribute a secondary importance to the offerings and the material renouncements, and begins to believe that the divinity demands from us above everything else the sacrifice of our hatreds, of our egoism and of the exclusive cult of our individuality. Man will meet with forgiveness only in so far as he forgives; on this condition he will merit divine participation and on this condition he will regain his lost life.

The sacrifice in fact continued in the prayer. Its mechanism is evidently the same: the word is an instrument which serves to prolong the contact with distant objects. As word is the organic projection of the seizing instinct, even so prayer is the projection beyond one's self of the divine restraint of the sacrifice: it maintains communication with God, and assures the infinite participation of the two principles of the engendered and the generator. It is natural, therefore, that for the prayer too we assisted at an evolution similar to that of the sacrifice and that we found there also similar conceptions of the whole. As the sacrifice was not an offering originally, but a magical pact destined to enchain the gods by constraint, the primitive prayer could not have been an *invocation* but an *evocation*. Prayer is equivalent to naming the gods and to reconciling them by the magic of the formulas. This could be arrived at only by gradual stages by progressive spiritualization culminating in the notion of intercession and finally of mystical communion of the human soul and the divine spirit. But we have already refuted this doctrine which is based on the prejudicial confusion of magic with religion. We are now going to give a criticism of it again. It will suffice for our purpose to retrace in a

few words the history of the prayer, necessarily parallel to that of the sacrifice. To the sacrifice of the offering of firstlings corresponds the prayer of homage. Above every other act and every other occupation, it is the elevation of the soul towards the supreme God. The most ancient manner of indicating the prayer in the Old Testament is by the words, "Pronounce the name of Jahveh," not, as has been mistakenly held, for connecting God by His magical evocation, but for elevating the spirit towards Him and for rendering homage to His power.

Sacrifice prolongs life, and prayer delivers us from sin. Prayer is always the necessary complement of sacrifice. By a natural evolution the oral rite tends more and more to gain a firm footing in the material rite, and it imposes itself on it in order to increase its action and efficacy. But like the initial sacrifice of the firstlings, this primitive invocation is not a positive demand for definite favours: it was of course present there, but it is rather a virtual interest,—the idea that one can fully enjoy life only by first becoming a part of the Divine Master. At the same time, as the blood of the animal for the perfume of the offering is exhaled by the victim, the soul of the faithful swells with prayer in order to reach God and to touch Him: the contact brings divine grace. Prayer touches God as the sacrifice, and this is why the Hebrews expressed by the same root '*atar*' the two correlative operations.

Prayer, as it progressed towards the Christian cult, must have remained a penitence and desecration—the necessary prelude to consecration: such are the prayers of Mazdaism and very similar to them are those of Babylonia. Christianity achieved this embryonic development and realized the scarcely attempted task of conversion. The new prayer can no longer be antique homage to the God in heaven. The historical intervention of a break in the rhythm of the world hinders the end of this reason from being identical with its commencement. Participation is the law of the third and last stage, and the definitive prayer, the prayer of life, shares the opposite characteristics which hitherto marked its successive stages. It is the prayer of the *Sermon on the Mount*—first a prayer of homage, for at the beginning the name of the Master is invoked and complete submission is offered to Him; then

the prayer of demand, for also the daily bread is solicited of him ; and finally the prayer of expiation, for the vow is taken to purify oneself of one's hatreds—i.e. from one's connections with the lower powers for obtaining in return the pardon for one's own offences and liberation from evil.

In this way prayer, like sacrifice, develops in the direction of increasing spirituality, and re-establishes the original hierarchy of creatures. Re-established in their true position, the intermediary spirits, instead of being autonomous gods, are now but intercessors with the sovereign Power: they are the subject only of a prayer of intercession. At the same time as the formula ceases to be a magic evocation and becomes a religious invocation, the spirit tends to disengage some words from scrupulous and ritualistic recitation in order to absorb itself in divine contact—in the communion of the soul with the divinity. To the sacrifice of communion corresponds the prayer of communion as its last synthesis—this “ respiration of the soul into God ” of the mystics which brings about the final participation of the two natures, human and divine. We should be on our guard, however, not to exaggerate the mysticism of this wordless prayer which would then become equivalent to ecstasy. Ecstasy is a state which exaggerates conversion just as magic exaggerated procession. The suppression of the individuality is thus obtained; the total absorption of the soul in God is not a real form of the life of which it transcends the limit, for life is a material and spiritual participation of the human individual and of the divine power. Prayer should therefore obey this law and maintain an intermediate position. The synthesis of the spirit and of the body—of the spirit which universalizes and of matter which makes for individualization—is produced fully by the Christian prayer which furnishes an example of the conciliation of the two types realized. The formula retains its ritual importance, but only on the condition of not sacrificing to it its profound significance.

THE NATURE OF RELIGION: THE VIEW OF A MODERN SCIENTIST

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I propose in the present paper to discuss Prof. Eddington's view of religion in relation to his view of the world of science and of the familiar world of sense.

Prof. Eddington's religious theory is closely bound up with his general position and may be best considered in relation to the latter. Hence it may be considered under the following heads:—

I. *The Constituents of Experiences*

The constituents of experience, according to Eddington, are:—

- (a) *Mental Images*. These are in our minds and not in the external world and are inscrutable ;
- (b) *The counterpart of our sense-experience*. It is in the external world and is inscrutable ; and
- (c) *A set of pointer-readings which science connects with other pointer-readings*.

(a), according to Eddington, is a construction out of (b), while (c), i.e. the world of mathematical equations and symbols, is an abstraction from it.

We shall now consider (c), (a) and (b) separately.

First consider (c). It is the *world of physics* and is amenable to treatment under the following heads:—

- (1) The materials of "field physics." These are relations and relata. In the end we are left with sixteen co-efficients for each relation, ten of them being symmetrical from which geometry and mechanics are constructed, and six of them asymmetrical from which is derived the science of electro-magnetism.
- (2) The physics of discontinuity which deals with (a) quanta and (b) electrons. But these are discovered by the empirical method of the laboratory.

Now consider (a), i.e. the familiar world of sense. It is a mental construction. The secondary qualities, i.e. colour, temperature, etc., as well as the primary qualities, i.e. permanence, structure, substantiality, etc., are the products of the mind's faculty of world-building.

Lastly, consider (b), i.e. the inscrutable counterpart of the sense-world and the world of science. Eddington opines that this background may be conceived as being a "spiritual substratum." It is not mental activity or consciousness but may be conceived as mind-stuff, "more general than our conscious minds, but . . . not altogether foreign to the feelings in our consciousness." As stuff, however, it is not substance, but only a basis of world-building. It may be noted that (b) is sometimes treated as an objective basis and sometimes as continuous with our conscious life.

II. *The Nature of Religious Experience*

Religion springs from our spiritual nature. We construct a "spiritual environment" in response to our spiritual nature just as we construct the world of sense in response to our sense-endowed being. Our spiritual environment is "just another world comparable to the material world of familiar experiences" and is "no less real" than the latter.

The reality of the spiritual world is, however, conceived from one of the following three different standpoints:

(1) Sometimes the *objective* standpoint is maintained as when Eddington speaks of our "deeper feelings" as "glimpses of a reality transcending the narrow limits of our particular consciousness."

(2) Sometimes again the standpoint of a *qualified subjectivity* is substituted for that of pure objectivity as when Eddington speaks of the higher reality as continuous with our consciousness and as "Universal Mind or Logos."

(3) Lastly, sometimes even qualified subjectivity is given up and we have pure, *unqualified subjectivity instead*. "We see in nature," Eddington says, "what we are equipped to look for"; we "build the spiritual world out of symbols taken from our

personality." Indeed Eddington sometimes goes so far as to affirm that value and significance are projections of our spiritual nature on a valueless, non-significant reality.

If we now consider Eddington's different lines of thought critically, we are at once struck by his view of science as a sort of symbolism restricted only to certain physical aspects of the universe. He evidently equates science to the science of physics and is not disposed to regard the biological, psychological and other sciences with the same degree of favour or approval as he seems to give in regard to mathematical physics and its differential and other equations. And thus he misses what is essential to a fruitful scientific outlook, viz. the unity and interdependence of the different sciences, biological, physiological and psychosociological. What modern science is trying to build up is a system, symbolic it may be, but permitting of quantitative and qualitative relations between physical, physiological and psychosociological phenomena. It is now possible, e.g. to proceed mathematically from physical energies and their quantities to their equivalents in sensational intensity or distinctness and also to their physiological reactions and thence to their psychological values in respect of reaction-time and other temporal and quantitative aspects of cognitive experience. Eddington's view, in fact, will result in a physical science of pointer-readings altogether separated from the rest of the sciences.

And it is not only the symbolic world of pointer-readings that thus gets detached from the rest of the sciences in Eddington's world-view ; the familiar world and the objective background of the familiar and scientific worlds are also disrupted and sundered from each other. The unity of the world of experience is thus dissolved into three independent and diverse realms. Experience is one unitary whole which we differentiate into subjective and objective elements comprised in the whole. Eddington, however, exalts into a fixed division of mental images, objective substratum and pointer-readings what are only constructed distinctions within a unitary experience. Such tripartite disruption, though not in itself illegitimate, is only admissible within such limits as will permit the reconstitution of the whole or unity which has been

thus sundered into independent elements. Eddington's three strata, however, are so sundered both in origin and character as to preclude all reconstruction of the original unity of experience.

The same defect of want of cohesion also characterizes Eddington's view of religion as an experience of a spiritual reality. He gives us three alternative standpoints which do not admit of unification into an intelligible whole or unity.

RELIGIOUS CATEGORIES AS UNIVERSAL EXPRESSIONS OF CREATIVE PERSONALITY

A STUDY IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF VALUES

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THE SELF AS CREATOR AND GUIDE

Religions may come, and religions may go, but creative man goes on for ever. As an instrument of life and as a creation of the human personality religion in its diverse forms and processes is universal and eternal. It is the dignity of the individual as the supreme fact of the universe that is the foundation of man's spiritual existence.

The group and the society, Nature, the region and the world are being perpetually influenced, moulded and re-made by the creative personality of man. The role of the individual as the transforming force in cultural metabolism has ever been the factual substratum of world-evolution. In the sociology of values no estimate of man's position *visa-à-vis* the world is more appropriate than what we find in the Jaina *Samādhi-śataka*, which says:

*Nayatyātmānamātmaiva
Janmanirvāṇameva vā
Gururātmāmanastasmāt
Nānyosī paramārthataḥ*

i.e., " It is the self that guides the self, its birth and its extinction. The self is its own preceptor and there is nothing else from the standpoint of superior values." Religion is one of the creations of the self like every other thing that belongs to culture or civilization.

THE PSYCHO-SOCIAL GESTALT IN RELIGION

Dharma and religion are almost synonymous or identical categories, in so far as each implies a binding or connective principle. A cementing or associative ideology is inextricably bound up with the Indian term as with the European. It is in the *milieu* of sociality, solidarism, harmony or equilibrium, in the domain of human experiences, whether individual or collective, that we have to move while dealing with the substance of *dharma* (=religion). Naturally, therefore, both in the East and in the West no category has been taken, consciously or unconsciously, in a more synthetic, comprehensive and all-sweeping manner than religion (= *dharma*).

Comprehensive categories are, as a matter of course, elastic and rather indefinite in contour and make-up. A delightful and often dangerous vagueness has therefore attached from the nature of the case to *dharma*-religious discussions. Religion has ever and everywhere been appealed to, as it can by all means legitimately be appealed to, on the most varied items of human life.

Our Manu and indeed all authors of *Dharma-śāstras* before and after him have devoted attention as much to the health and wealth of men and women as to their manners, customs, laws and constitutions. From eugenics, dietetics and sanitation to jurisprudence, economics and politics there is no branch of human science, physical or mental, individual or social, which has been ignored, overlooked or minimized in these encyclopaedic treatises.

Psychologically, therefore, if there is anything on which the human brains have a right to fight among themselves, it is pre-eminently religion (*dharma*). Generally speaking, it would be a sheer accident if any two thinking, scientific, philosophical or

creative minds were independently to focus their activities on just the same phases and items of life or thought while dealing with such an all-sweeping, synthetic or pluralistic category. A museum of religions is just the most appropriate pandemonium of thought—the veritable battle-ground of nations.

In the manner of the chemical analyst in his laboratory it may indeed be possible for the anthropological, historical, scientific or philosophical student of religion to isolate the diverse items or aspects of the religious complex from one another and deal with them one by one individually. This intellectual analysis may be of great help in logic, psychology, metaphysics or sociology. But it is the synthetic whole—and not the individual parts—that men and women, even the philosophers and scientists themselves, vaguely call religion or *dharma* when they apply it to their own life in the interest of day-to-day and concrete problems, individual or social. Religion is really one of the expressions of the psycho-social *Gestalt*¹ or “configuration” of creative man. In the interest of intellectual clarification the *Gestalt* or structural whole may be pulverized into its contentual atoms, into the *Beziehungen* relations and processes to use an expression from von Wiese’s sociology. For certain purposes of scientific and philosophical laboratory-collaboration we may dissociate the religious from the psychical and the social. This pulverization or dissociation can, however, but lead to the isolation of anaemic or bloodless corpuscles as pure abstractions ought to be called from the viewpoint of human values. The analysis of parts may nourish our brains as a discipline in logic; but it is the *Gestalt* or total inter-relations and form-complex that rule our life. The identities in the individual items, the elemental atoms or raw materials may not therefore lead to any identity or formal similarity in the psycho-social or socio-economic *Gestalt* of the persons or groups.

THE GESTALT OF PRIMITIVE RELIGION

The results of scientific analysis in the field of religion are

¹ S. C. Mitra, “Gestalt Theory in German Psychology,” Lecture at the Bangiya Jarman-Vidya Samsad (Bengali Society of German Culture).

quite well-known. Even in analytical treatments of religion we are but presented with a diversity of views.

In one group¹ we encounter the view as formulated by Wundt, for instance, in his *Ethik*, that all moral commands have originally the character of religious commandments. That religion furnishes the beginnings of all morality is almost a postulate with a very large number of investigators. The most extreme view is perhaps to be found in Durkheim's *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*, according to which science, poetry, plastic arts, law, morality and what not have all been derived from myths, legends, religious ceremonies and ritualistic practices.

An exactly opposite view is also tenable. In Westermarck's *Origin and Development of Moral Ideas* morality cannot be traced in its origins to the gods or religious ideas. He says that among very many peoples religion cannot be proved to be associated with the regulation of social life. The independence of morality from religion is likewise the conclusion to be derived from Meyer's studies in the *Geschichte des Alterthums* ('History of the Ancient World').

Religion and society are both creations of man. Instead of establishing the religious "interpretation of society" or social "interpretation of religion" it is time to recognize or rather re-emphasize the supreme majesty of man as the creator of the thousand and one items which constitute the *Gestalt* of culture or civilization. This is why we should be prepared very often for situations in which the social and the religious are inextricably mixed up with one another, instead of the one being the *function* of the other.

In an objective examination of human attitudes and relations it is possible even to establish an equation between religion and family-life, as Tönnies does in *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*

Calcutta, on September 26, 1936; *The Calcutta Review* for January, 1937; R. H. Wheeler, *The Science of Psychology* (New York, 1929) and K. Koffka, *The Principles of Gestalt Psychology* (London, 1935).

¹ C. Bouglé, *L'Evolution des Valeurs* (Paris, 1929), pp. 127-129; W. Schmidt, *Origin and Growth of Religion* (London, 1935), p. 132.

('Community and Society').¹ For, it is in and through the sacredness ascribed to marriage, birth of children, respect for elders, mourning for the dead and other incidents of family life that religion has always and everywhere worked on human spirit and conscience.

Thus considered, religion is virtually coeval with man and his creations. It is impossible to accept the recent thesis of *La Mythologie Primitive* in which Lévy-Bruhl has developed the doctrine of primitive society as being marked by pre-religion. A condition like this is as unthinkable psychologically and undemonstrable anthropologically as his conception of pre-logical or pre-critical mentality such as had been established by him in *Les Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures*.²

Rather, in regard to the relations between the logical and the pre-logical or illogical, an acceptable view is that of Pareto, who in his *Trattato di Sociologia Generale* has brought into the boldest relief the instincts, emotions, prejudices, etc., i.e. the non-logical and non-rational elements such as influence the purely rational or mechanistic scheme of human life. The activities or behaviours of men and women are determined by "constant drives" or "residues" of personality. And these residues are, as a rule, so conflicting that human behaviour becomes normally to all intents and purposes illogical and self-contradictory. There is then plenty of logic in Frazer's standpoint that superstitions are as natural, nay, as beneficial to human beings as rationalism, logicalness and self-consistency.³

The "irrationals" of Pareto are not, however, to be discovered as the only mental features in the alleged pre-logical and pre-religious strata of primitive society. Besides, the Paretian "irrationals" are quite in evidence even in the most hyper-developed conditions of complex culture-systems. And the most

¹ Edition of 1935 (Leipzig), pp. 37, 234-235.

² Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization* (New York, 1922), pp. 380-389; W. Schmidt, *The Origin and Growth of Religion* (London, 1935); A. Ouy's resumé in *Revue Internationale de Sociologie* (Paris, May-June, 1935), pp. 317-318; J. Leyder, "Association primitive d'Idées" in *Comptes rendus du deuxième Congrès National des Sciences* (Brussels, 1935), which furnishes an objective criticism of Lévy-Bruhl's *La Mythologie Primitive*.

³ J. G. Frazer, *Psyche's Task* (London, 1913), p. 154.

primitive of all minds is to be credited with criticism, discrimination or logic. It would be wrong to identify the religious with the irrational. In the making of religion the whole personality of creative man is active.

The position of Bouglé is, therefore, reasonable. It admits that¹ the logicity and the rationality of the primitives are abundantly manifest in their religious prescriptions. The modern mind, known to be logical and rational as it is, has not established anything more serious than obedience to the old, generosity towards friends, living in peace with neighbours and avoidance of intercourse with the wives of others, such as were imposed by their gods on the Australians. The divinities of the Andamans likewise punish thieving, robbery and adultery. All these items of "savage" life are not less logical and not less rational than any set of commandments devised by civilized man.

L'existence d'une mentalité logique ("the existence of a logical mentality") may be demonstrated among the Sudanese peoples of Belgian Congo. Even the mystical mentality is not absent, although rare, says Leyder.

The mixture of the rational and the irrational, the logical and the illogical, is an integral part of the human *psyche*. Herein is to be found the eternal duplicity of man, as Pascal maintained. Morality is indeed dualistic, nay, pluralistic. Inconsistencies are nowhere more glaring than among the "leaders" or builders of civilization, whether ancient or modern, in whom, as a rule, as Sorokin observes, the "savagery of a lion," the "slyness of a fox," or, at any rate, severity, cynicism and moral indifferentism constitute the "necessary pre-requisites for successful climbing through many channels."²

In other words, the presence of alleged superstitions, wherever they may exist, does not lead to the total eclipse of many rational, logical, 'humane' and such other desirable cultural characteristics.

Primitive mentality as operating in the religion of "savages" was not all haphazard, bizarre and incoherent. The *Wakan* of

¹ *L'Evolution des Valeurs* (Paris, 1929), pp. 135-136, 141-142.

² P. Sorokin, *Social Mobility* (New York, 1927), pp. 308-311.

the Sioux tribe of North America and the *Mana* of the Melanesians are impersonal and anonymous forces such as serve to impart movement and life to the animate and inanimate objects. It is forces like these that are embodied in the *totem*, which is ultimately adored as the divine ancestor of the race. It is impossible to minimize in *totem-worship* the profoundly religious aspects of life as understood by the modern mind.

In the rites organized by the primitives to permit contacts between the two worlds, secular and sacred, "don't we recognize," asks Bouglé quite correctly, "the rudiment of the sacrifices, communions and oblations which will occupy such a great place in the most complex religions?" Mysticism is thus found to have a very long history.

In the most ancient of human cultures, again, if we may follow Father Schmidt,¹ the belief in a Supreme Being was very deeply and strongly rooted. Traces of this belief are to be found among the Hokus, Algonkins and other tribes of North America. And the idea is gaining ground that this Supreme Being is really the god of a monotheism, especially among the Bushmen of Africa, the Kurnai of South-East Australia, most of the peoples of the Arctic culture, and virtually all the tribes of North America.

FOLK-RELIGIONS

Between the totemism of the primitives and the world-religions of today the psychological and moral links, then, are not few and far between. Not less prominent are the intimacies between the most diverse races of the civilized world so far as the intellectual and moral outfit of personality is concerned. The folk-psychology of the East and the West, as exhibited in the literary creations of Eur-Asia, is found to be uniform in a remarkable degree.

We find no difficulty in believing, for instance, with Renan who maintains in his *Mission de Phénicie* that mankind from the earliest times on has worshipped at the same place.² No matter what race, it has virtually succumbed to the magical or hypnotic spell, so to say, of the sacred spots of history.

¹ *The Origin and Growth of Religion* (London, 1935), pp. 260-262.

² J. Goldziher, *Mohammedanische Studien*, Zweiter Theil (Halle a.S., 1890), p. 334.

The history of North Africa shows that from generation to generation the same holy place changes the names of the saints. Only the names change, however; but the sacredness, the divine consecration and the sanctity of the place are handed down through the rise and fall of folk-tradition from the earliest to the most recent times. The Folk-Mohammedanism of Tunis and Algeria, for instance, is essentially the worship of gods and saints—the *Ginn*—to which the North Africans had been used for centuries.¹

Folk-festivals in connection with the tombs of *Wali*, both male and female, are to be observed as much among the Bedouins of Arabia and the fellaheen of Egypt as among the Moslems of Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine and India. And in many of these festivals the non-Moslems take as great a part as the Moslems.²

In the domain of folklore also, which is very often virtually identical with and forms an integral part of folk-religion, the most striking characteristic is the identity or similarity between the mental reactions of the Eastern and Western races. Delight in the stories of adventure, interest in the romantic, the humorous and the marvellous, and sympathy with the fortunes of the heroic personalities whether fictitious or real, are not confined to any particular race. These are ingrained in the "original nature" of man, so to speak, and form part of his theatrical instincts, love of play and sense of fun. The stories of the *Rāmāyana*, the *Iliad*, the *Cuchulain*, the *Beowulf* and the *Nibelungenlied* cater to the same demand among different peoples.³

The mysteries and miracles of medieval Europe as well as the "passion-plays" of Oberammergau and Erl have had their counterparts in India too. Chambers's *Medieval Stage* is an account as much of the folk-ludi, feasts, pageants, buffooneries, folk-dances and folk-drama of Europe as of the *Yātrā*, *Rāmāṭilā*,

¹ Goldziher, Vol. II, pp. 344-345.

² Goldziher, Vol. II, pp. 328-334.

³ Ridgeway, *Origin of Tragedy* (1910), *Dramas and Dramatic Dances of Non-European Races* (1915); Ed. Chavannes, *Contes et Legendes du Bouddhisme Chinois, Fables Chionis du VIIe au VIIIe Siècle, Cinq cents Contes et Apologues*. The migration of folk-lore is traced by Chavannes in these studies.

Bharat-milāp and *Gambhīrā* of India with slight verbal modifications.¹

Masks of beasts besmeared with filth are not yet things of the past in European festivities.² Christian manners grant "indulgences" to the moralities which are practised in connection with 'vigils' or 'wakes' (i.e. all-night watches) that are enforced on the anniversary or dedication day of churches. Summer festivals in the Occident are notorious for such "moral holidays." All this is not psychologically, ethnologically or climatologically distinct from the Asian practices wherever they may be detected by sociologists.

Some of the Buddhist *Jātaka*-stories of the pre-Christian era as well as of the tales prevalent among the various peoples of India today are common to those with which the Europeans and the Americans are familiar, e.g. in Grimm's collections. Thus the stories of St. Peter in disguise as beggar being entertained by Bruder Lustig of *Brüderchen* and *Schwesterchen*, of the substituted bride, of the ass in Kaden's *Unter den Olivenbäumen*, of Teufel smelling human flesh, of the queen's order to kill Maruzedda's three children and bring their liver and heart, of the daughter telling her father, the king, that she loves him like salt and water, of gold-spitting princes and pearl-dropping maidens, belong to the tradition of both Hindustan and Europe.

The popular May-festivals of Europe and the spring-celebrations (*Holi*, *Dol-yātrā*, etc.) all over India are born of a common need and satisfy the same hunger of the human heart. The agricultural observances, harvest rites, ceremonial songs and rustic holidayings of the Christian are akin to those of the Hindu.³

The ideals of life have been statistically and historically the same in Asia and Eur-America. The student of culture-systems

¹ B. K. Sarkar, *Folk-Element in Hindu Culture* (London, 1917).

² Chambers, *Medieval Stage*, Vol. I, pp. 93, 115, 145, 149; Stubbs, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents* (1869-78), p. 149; cf. Lecky, *European Morals*, Vol. II, pp. 288, 367.

³ Martinengo-Caesaresco, *Essays in the Study of Folksongs* (London, 1914); John Moyle, *The present ill state of the practice of physik in this nation truly represented*, London, 1702 (a study in British superstitions).

can, therefore, declare his inductive generalization in the following words of Walt Whitman:

“ These are really the thoughts of all men in all ages
and lands,
This is the grass that grows where the land is and
the water is.
This is the common air that bathes the globe.”

It is the intellectuals in a community that are interested in the doctrines of theology, philosophy and metaphysics, while the man in the street, in the theatrical, scenic or anecdotal aspects of God, the soul and the other world. The morals, however, though they depend in the last analysis on the individual's status in the economic grades or classes of a people, may for ordinary purposes be taken to be the outcome of its general consensus and collective tradition. In a study of comparative religion we must take care to point out exactly which of these three phases of socio-religious life or human values we have singled out for discussion, for it is clear that it would be unscientific to compare the popular superstitions and folk-beliefs of one faith with the metaphysical speculations in which the high-browed Doctors of Divinity indulge in another.

THE SOCIOLOGY OF CHRISTIANITY

Dante, the greatest poet, saint and mystic of Roman Catholicism, was very much agitated over the “ she-wolf ” (moral and political muddle of his time). He used to predict the advent of a “ Greyhound,” a *Veltro* or Deliverer, who would restore on earth the Universal Italian Empire, both temporal and spiritual. His prophecy finds expression in several eloquent passages of the *Divine Comedy*. Thus Virgil, the “ master and guide ” of the poet, gives the following hope in the first canto:

“ This beast
At whom thou criest her way will suffer none
To pass, and no less hindrance makes than death:
To many an animal in wedlock vile
She fastens, and shall yet to many more,

Until that Greyhound comes, who shall destroy
 Her with sharp pain. He will not life support
 By earth nor its base metals, but by love,
 Wisdom and virtue; and his land shall be
 The land 'twixt either Feltro. In his might
 Shall safety to Italia's plains arise,
 For whose fair realm Camilla, virgin pure,
 Nisus, Euryalus and Turnus fell."

The same apocalyptic faith in an *Avatāra* or God-incarnate-in-man has maintained the optimistic Hindu in all ages of national distress. The advent of Messiahs to embody the successive *Zeitgeists* is thus guaranteed in the *Gītā* by Lord Kṛishṇa Himself:

*Yadā yadā hi dharmasya
 glānir bhavati Bhārata
 Abhyutthānam adharmasya
 tadātmānam srijāmyaham.
 Paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām
 vināśāya cha dushkṛitām
 Dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya
 sambhavāmi yuge yuge.*

"Whensoever into Order
 Corruption creeps in, Bhārata,
 And customs bad ascendant be,
 Then Myself do I embody.
 For the advancement of the good
 And miscreants to overthrow
 And for setting up the Order
 Do I appear age by age."

Medieval Christianity did not produce only one *Divine Comedy*. Each of the Gothic Cathedrals of the thirteenth century Europe is a *Divine Comedy* in stone. It may be confidently asserted that the spiritual atmosphere of these noble structures with their soul-inspiring sculptures in alabaster and bronze has not been surpassed in the architecture of the East.¹

¹ B. K. Sarkar, *Hindu Art: Its Humanism and Modernism* (New York, 1920) and "The Aesthetics of Young India" (*Rupam*, Calcutta, January, 1922).

We shall now consider a few specimens of Christian anthropology. On Christmas and New Year days the folks of Christendom are used to forecasting their lot according to the character of the first visitor. And what is the burden of their queries? "What will be the weather?" they ask, and "what the crops?" How, besides, are they to "fare in love and the begetting of children?" And a common superstition among the *Hausfrauen* enjoins that wealth must come in and not be given out on certain days. Such days and such notions are not rare in Confucian-Taoist, Hindu, and Buddhist Asia.

It is well known, further, that in South-West England as in parts of Continental Europe, there are several *tabus* in regard to food. Hares, rabbits, poultry, for instance, are not eaten, because they are "derived from his father" as the peasant believes.¹ There is nothing distinctively Christian in these customs and traditions. Asians can also heartily take part in the processions attending the bathing of images, boughs of trees, etc., with which the rural populations of Christian lands celebrate their May-pole or summer festivities. And they would easily appreciate how men could be transformed into wolves by the curse of St. Natalis Cambrensis.

Would the ritualism, the rosary, the relic-worship, the hagiology, the consecrated edifices, the "eternal" oil-lamps in *Waldkapellen* (forest-chapels), pilgrimages, prayers, votive offerings, self-denial during Lent, fasts and chants of the Roman Catholics scare away the Shintoists of Japan, Taoists of China, or Buddhists of Asia? By no means. Indeed, there are very few Chinese, Japanese or Hindus who would not be inspired by the image of Mary. Nations used to the worship of Kwanyin, Kwannon, Tārā, or Lakshmi could not find a fundamentally new mentality or view of life in the atmosphere of a Greek or Catholic Church service. And the doctrine of faith (*bhakti*, *śraddhā*), the worship of a Personal God, and preparedness for salvation (*mukti*) are not more Christian than Buddhist or Hindu.

¹ Gomme, *Ethnology and Folk-Lore* (London); Ashton, *Shinto, the Way of the Gods* (London, 1905); Harađz, *The Faith of Japan* (London, 1914).

Men and women who do not feel strong without postulating God would produce almost the same philosophy of the Infinite and of the immortal soul if they happen to be intellectual. But if they happen to be emotional or imaginative or "irrational" (?), as human beings generally are, they would create more or less the self-same arts (images, pictures, *bas-reliefs*, hymns, prayers, rituals, fetishes, charms). Humanity is, in short, essentially one—in spite of physical and physiognomic diversities, and in spite of deep historic race-prejudices. The effort to understand the nature of God or the relation between man and Divinity is the least part of a person's real religion. The *élan vital* of human life has always and everywhere consisted in the desire to live and in the power to flourish by responding to the thousand and one stimuli of the universe and by utilizing the innumerable world-forces.

THE CATEGORIES OF CONFUCIANISM

Let us watch the psycho-social *Gestalt* of China. Confucianism is the name wrongly given to the cult of public sacrifices devoted to *Shāngti* (the One Supreme Being), the *Tāo* (the Way), and ancestor-worship that has been obtaining among the Chinese people from time immemorial. This cult of what is really an adoration of nature-powers happens to be called Confucianism, simply because. Confucius (B. C. 551-479), the librarian of Lu State in Shantung, compiled or edited for his countrymen the floating Ancient Classics, the *Yi-king* ("Book of Changes"), the *Shu-king* ("Book of History"), the *Shi-king* ("Book of Poetry") and others in which the traditional faith finds expression. The work of Confucius for China was identical with that of Ezra (B. C. 450) of Israel who edited for the Hebrews the twenty-four books of the Old Testament that had been burnt and lost. In this sense or thus misnamed, Confucianism had existed among the Chinese long before Confucius was born, in the same manner as the Homeric poems had been in circulation in the Hellenic world ages before Pisistratus of Athens had them brought together in well-edited volumes.

Confucianism is often considered as not being a religion at all, because it is generally taken to be equivalent to positivism,

i.e. a Godless system of mere morals, and hence alleged to be necessarily inadequate to the spiritual needs of man. The fact, however, is quite otherwise. The Socratic sayings of Confucius, that are preserved in the *Analects*, the *Doctrine of the Mean* and other treatises, have indeed no reference to the supernatural, the unseen or the other world. The fallacy of modern sinologues consists in regarding these moralizings as the whole message of China's Superman. Strictly speaking, they should be treated only as a part of a system which in its entirety has a place as much for the gods, sacrifices, prayers, astrology, demonology, tortoise worship, divination and so forth of Taoist and Folk-China as for the purely ethical conceptions of the duty towards one's neighbour or the ideal relations between human beings.¹

This alleged positivism or atheism of Confucius, and the pre-Confucian religion of ancient China, which for all practical purposes was identical with the polytheistic nature-cult of the earliest "Indo-Aryan" races, have both to be sharply distinguished from another Confucianism. For since about the fifth century A. C. the worship of Confucius as a god has been planted firmly in the Chinese consciousness and institutions. This latter-day Confucius-cult is a cult of nature-forces affiliated to the primitive *Shāngti*-cult, Heaven-cult, Tai-(Mountain) cult, etc. of the Chinese. In this Confucianism Confucius is a god among gods.

BUDDHALOLOGY AND CHRISTOLOGY

Similarly in Buddhism also we have to recognize two fundamentally different sets of phenomena. There are two Buddhisms essentially distinct from each other. The first is the religion or system of moral discipline founded by Śākya (B. C. 563-483), the son of the president or archon (*rājan*) of the Śākya republic in Eastern India, who came to be called the *Buddha* or the Enlightened (the Awakened). Śākya founded an order (*saṅgha*) of monks, and adumbrated the philosophy of twelve *nidānas* (links

¹ B. K. Sarkar, *Chinese Religion Through Hindu Eyes* (Shanghai, 1916), "Confucianism, Buddhism and Christianity" (*Open Court*, Chicago, November, 1919) and *The Futurism of Young Asia* (Berlin, 1922); Werner, *Chinese Sociology* (London, 1910); De Groot, *Religion in China* (New York, 1912).

between ignorance and birth) and the ethics of the eightfold path. In this Buddhism, which should really be called Sākyaism, Buddha is of course neither a god nor a prophet of God, but only a preacher among the preachers of his time. The system is generally known as *Hinayāna* (the Lower Vehicle of Buddhism). Its prominent tenet is *nirvāṇa* or the cessation of misery (annihilation of pain).¹

But there is another faith in which Buddha is a or rather the god. This Buddha-cult, or Buddhism strictly so called, cannot by any means be fathered upon Sākya, the moralist. It chanced to evolve out of the schisms among his followers. Buddha-worship was formulated by Aśvaghosha and came into existence as a distinct creed about the first century A. C. in north-western India during the reign of Kanishka, the Indo-Tartar Emperor. This faith, also called *Mahāyāna* (the Greater Vehicle), was theologically much allied to, and did not really differ in ritual and mythology from, the contemporary Jain and Pūṇic-Hindu "isms" of India. It is this Buddhism, furnished as it is with gods and goddesses, that was introduced from Central Asia into China in A. C. 67, from China into Korea in A. C. 372, and from Korea into Japan in A. C. 552.

The contrast between Sākya the preacher and Buddha the god, or Confucius the moralist and Confucius the god has its parallel in Christology also. Modern criticism expresses this contrast, says Bacon in the *Making of the New Testament*, in its distinction of the gospel of Jesus from the gospel about Jesus. The distinction between Sākyaism and Buddhism, or between Confucianism as the system of tenets in the body of literature compiled by Confucius and Confucianism in which Confucius figures as a Divinity, as a colleague of *Shāngti*, is the same in essence as that between the teachings of Jesus the Jew and teachings, say, of St. Paul about Jesus the Christ who is God-in-man.

THE AVATĀRAS OF INDIA, ISRAEL AND CHINA

The incarnation-myths of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and similar legends of the *Jātakas* (Birth-Stories) must have developed as early as the

¹ De la Vallée Poussin, *Nirvāṇa* (Paris, 1925); T. Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa* (Leningrad, 1927); N. Dutt, *Aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism in its Relation to Hinayāna* (London, 1930).

epoch of Maurya imperialism (B. C. 322-185). While the poets of the *Rāma*-legend sang,

" For Viṣṇu's self disdained not moral birth,
And heaven came with him as he came to earth,"

and Kṛiṣṇa proclaimed in the *Gītā* section of the *Mahābhārata*: " Forsake all *dharma*s (ways, *Taos*, creeds), make Me alone thy way," the sculptors of India were carving *bas*-reliefs in order to represent scenes in the life of Sākya deified as the Buddha. The post-Aśoka but pre-Christian sculptures at Bhārhut (second century B. C.) leave no doubt as to the prevalence of a faith in Buddha whose birth was believed to be supernatural and whose career was to anticipate ideologically the holy ministrations of the Syrian Messiah. Besides, the mind of India had become used to such emphatic announcements of the *Gītā* as the following:

" I am the Father, and the Fostering Nurse,
Grandsire, and Mother of the Universe,
I am the Vedas, and the Mystic word,
The way, the support, the witness and the Lord.
The Seed am I of deathless quickening power
The Home of all, the mighty Refuge-tower."

Buddha-cult was thus born and nurtured in a perfectly congenial atmosphere.

The Pauline doctrine of Jesus as an *Avatāra*, i.e. God-incarnate-in-man was also quite in keeping with the spiritual *milieu* of the age, rife as it was with the notions of Redeemer-gods. Here an Osiris, there a Mitra was commanding the devotion of the civilized world as a god resurrected after death to save mankind. Parallel to the development in Iran, which transformed Zarathustra¹ from the man-prophet-singer of the *Gāthās* into a supernatural and semi-divine figure, there was in Israel the continuous and progressive re-interpretation of traditional beliefs and symbols, as Canon Charles points out in the *Religious Development Between the Old and New Testaments*. From the third century B. C. on, as a consequence, whole histories centred round

¹ Moulton, *Early Religious Poetry of Persia* (Cambridge, 1911).

such conceptions as the soul, spirit, *sheol*, Paradise, Messianic Kingdom, the Messiah, the Resurrection. The idea of the Redeemer was taking definite shape, for instance, in the following verses of the *Psalms of Solomon* composed about the first century B. C.:

“ Behold, O Lord, and raise up into them
 Their King, the son of David,
 At the time in which thou seest, O God,
 That he may reign over Israel Thy servant
 And gird him with strength that he may
 Shatter unrighteous rulers
 And that he may purge Jerusalem from
 Nations that trample her down to destruction.”

In India the rhapsodists of the Vālmīkian cycle were singing of the advent of the Messiah as Rāma, and the Sākyan monks elaborating the Buddhist stories of incarnation (*Jātaka*) in the self-same strain. Nor was China to be left without an *Avatāra* or a deified personality. In the fourth century B. C. Mencius, the St. Paul of Confucianism, calls his great Master *Chi Ta-cheng*, i.e. the embodiment of highest perfection. Three hundred years after his death Confucius was made Duke and Earl. Sze Ma-chien, the Chinese Herodotus (first century B. C.) describes him as the “divinest of men.” But by the end of the first century A. C. the birthplace of Confucius had become a goal for the pilgrim and even emperors wended their way to pay respects to his shrine. In A. C. 178, says Giles in *Confucianism and its Rivals*, a likeness of Confucius had been placed in his shrine as a substitute for the wooden tablet in use up to that date. In 267 an Imperial decree ordered the sacrifice of a pig, a sheep and an ox to Confucius at each of the four seasons. The first complete Confucian temple was built and dedicated in 505. About 555 it was enacted that a Confucian temple should be built in every prefectural city, for the people had come to “look upon Confucius as a god to be propitiated for the sake of worldly advantages.”

This heroification and deification of Confucius was not an isolated phenomenon in the Chinese world, for China was also simultaneously transforming Lao-tsze, his senior contemporary,

into a Divinity. The Tāoist writers had begun to describe their great prophet as an incarnation of some Superior Being who came among men in human shape in every age. They told also the various names under which he appeared from the remotest period of fabulous antiquity down as late as the sixth century, making in all seven periods.

Indeed, the spiritual experience of the entire human race was passing through almost the same climacteric. Zoroastrianism was evolving Mitraism, Chinese classics were evolving the worship of Confucius and Lao-tsze, Hinduism was evolving Buddha-cult, Kṛishṇa-cult, Rāma-cult, etc. and Judaism was in the birth-throes of Christ-cult.

The elaboration of these "Great Exemplars," *Avatāras* or "Supermen" is but one of the forms in which the uniform psychological metabolism of the different races was manifesting itself. The types of ethical and spiritual "perfection" or highest ideals and norms in human personality, that had been slowly acquiring prominence in India, in the Hellenistic world and in China during the preceding centuries at last began to crystallize themselves out of the solution of folk-experience and emerge as distinctly individualized entities. The world-forces or nature-powers of the antique world, viz. Mother Earth and the elemental energies, furnished no doubt the basic foundations and the nuclei for these types or patterns. Folk-imagination in brooding over the past and reconstructing ancient traditions had sanctified certain historic personalities,¹ legendary heroes or eponymous culture-pioneers, and endowed their names with a halo of romance. Philosophical speculation had been groping in the dark as to the mysteries of the universe and had stumbled upon the One, the Unknown, the Eternal, the Absolute, the Infinite, the Ideal. Last, but not the least, are the contributions of the "lover, the lunatic and the poet,"—the Mark, the Matthews, the Mencius, the Vālmiki, the Áśvaghosha—who came to weld together all these elements into artistic shapes, "fashioning forth" those sons of

¹ W. Ridgeway, *Origin of Tragedy*, 1910, and *Dramas and Dramatic Dances of Non-European Races in Special Reference to the Origin of Greek Tragedy*, 1915.

God—concrete human personalities to embody at once the man-in-God and the God-in-man.

THE WALI-CULT IN ISLAM

More or less identical is the psycho-social *Gestalt* of the Moslem world. Mohammed was already looked upon by his immediate followers as an "extra-human miracle-worker" (*übermenschlicher Wundermann*) and his death surprised even Caliph Omar as something impossible or inconceivable.¹ Everybody who wanted to believe that Mohammed had died was threatened by Omar with the most gruesome punishments. The biographers of Mohammed during the subsequent generation enriched his life-story with the details of his miracles. In the third century after his death, Ibn Hibban of Andulasia went so far as to say that Mohammed was not a human being subject to hunger and thirst.

The *Wali*-cult of the Mussulmans throughout the world—in Asia, Africa and Europe—is psychologically linked up with the normal *Heiligenverehrung* (saint-worship) or hagiology of all races of men. Moslem faith in the power of *Igma* is but a part of the most universally observed folk-mentality which feels helpless without supernatural agencies and extra-human energies.

THE ETHICAL EQUATIONS OF NATIONS

The ethical conceptions or moral codes of a people are bound up inextricably with its economic and social institutions. For all practical purposes they may very often be regarded as almost independent of its strictly religious thought, its theological doctrines, and the hypotheses of its prophets or thinkers regarding the nature of Godhead, the soul, and the relation between man and the Creator. While, therefore, the "whole duty of man" is sure to differ with people and people, nay, with class and class, and also with epoch and epoch in each nation and in each class, it is still remarkable that the most fundamental categories

¹ *Faddāil-al-aṣḥab*, No. 6, *Al-Tabarī* I, p. 1815, and *Al-Zurkāni* IV, p. 128, quoted in Goldziher's *Mohammedanische Studien*, Vol. II (Halle, 1890), pp. 283-284.

of moral life all the world over have been the same. The ethical systems of historic Confucianism, Buddhism and Christianity are broad-based on almost identical notions of the good and the right. Social equilibria or similarities and equations between the nations in psycho-social *Gestalt* are nowhere more prominent than in the domain of moral ideals.

But here it is necessary to make a few special remarks about Confucianism. In the first place, suggestive sex-ideas associated with such concepts as "immaculate conception" in Christlore or "energy" (*Śakti*, the female "principle") in Buddhist and Hindu mythologies do not appear to have any place either in the *Classics* compiled by Confucius the man or in the religion in which Confucius is a god. From the standpoint of conventional morality, Confucianism is perhaps the most chaste and undefiled of the great world-religions.

In the second place, one must not argue from this that the Chinese mentality is what Confucianism presumes it to be, for China is not mere Confucius magnified. Every Chinese is a Confucianist, and yet something more. Like the Japanese who is at once a believer in *Kāmi* (supernatural agencies or nature powers), *Shinto* (the way of the gods), a polytheistic cult of world-forces, a Confucianist as well as a Buddhist, the men and women of China, almost one and all, are Tāoists (followers of Lao-tsze's mystical cult of *Tāo*, Way or Natural Order) and Buddhists at the same time that they offer sacrifices to Confucius and *Shāngti*. When the head of the family dies, as says Wu Ting-fang in the preface to the present author's *Chinese Religion through Hindu Eyes*, the funeral services are conducted in a most cosmopolitan way, for the Tāoist priests and the Buddhist monks as well as nuns are usually called in to recite prayers for the dead in addition to the performance of ceremonies in conformity with the Confucian rules of "propriety." The *mores* of Chinese life, eclectic as it is, cannot thus all be found in the teachings of the *Classics* alone.

LIFE-DENIAL, MYSTICISM AND POSITIVISM

One need not be surprised, therefore, to find in the Chinese *Weltanschauung* or view of life a place for the pessimism that one

meets with in the announcements of Jesus. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me," said Jesus, "is not worthy of Me." And further, "if any man cometh unto Me, and leaveth not his father and mother and wife and children, he cannot be My disciple." Here is the origin of the system that, backed by St. Paul's recommendation of celibacy for Christ's followers, ultimately developed into Christian monasticism and the ethics of retreat from the "world and the flesh." The self-same doctrine of holiness by means of asceticism, life-denial and self-mortification has had a long tradition in pre-Confucian China as well as in China since the age of Lao-tsze and Confucius. Even in the earliest ages of Chinese history perfection, holiness or divinity was held to be exclusively attainable by dispassion, apathy, willlessness, unconcernedness about the pleasures and pains of life, quietism, or *wu-wei*. Emperor Hwang-ti of hoary antiquity is mentioned by Chwang-tsze (fourth century B. C.), the great follower of Lao-tsze, as having retired for three months in order to prepare himself for receiving the *Tāo* from an ascetic who practised freedom from mental agitation.

Along with this pessimistic strand of Christianity Chinese moral consciousness can also display the mystical leaning of Jesus as manifest in such declarations as—"the Kingdom of God is within you" or "My Kingdom is not of this world." Thus, says Chwang-tsze: "Be free yourself from subjective ignorance and individual peculiarities, find the *Tāo* in your own being, and you will be able to find it in others too, because the *Tāo* cannot be one in one thing and another in another." And according to the *Tāo-te-ching*, the Bible of Taoism, "mighty is he who conquers himself," and further, "if you keep behind, you shall be in front," or "he who is content has enough." These are the tenets of passivism and non-resistance that Jesus stood for when he advised his followers to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's."

We need not dwell here on the ascetic or pietistic ideals and institutions of Buddhism, as the Plotinus, the St. Francis, the Jacopone da Todis, the Böhmes, the Ruysbroecks and the Guyons of India are too well-known. But we have rather to emphasize, on the other hand, the fact that transcendentalism, idealism or

mysticism is not the only attitude or philosophy of ethical life advanced by or associated with the religious systems of the world. Not less is the ethics of positivism, i.e., of humanitarian energism (*virya*) and social service or brotherhood (*sarva-sattva-maitri*) a prominent feature in Hinduism, in Buddhism, in Christianity, and in the moral *dicta* of the Chinese sages like Confucius, Moh-ti, the preacher of universal love, and Mencius, the advocate of tyrannicide.

There is no doubt a great difference in the manner in which the categories have been stated in the different systems, especially as regards the intellectual analysis or psychological classification of the cardinal virtues and vices. But from the viewpoint of moral discipline none but a hide-bound linguist or a student of formal logic can fail to notice the pragmatic identity of life governed by the "eightfold path" of Śākya, the "five duties" of Confucius and the "ten commandments" of the Bible. Nay, like the Mosaic dictates, the Confucian and Śākyan principles are too elemental to have been missed by the prophets of any nation.

RECIPROCITY, SOLIDARISM AND SOCIAL SERVICE

The most important tenet in Confucius's moral creed is to be found in the idea of "reciprocity."¹ It is thus worded in his *Doctrine of the Mean*: "What you do not wish others should do unto you, do not do unto them." In a negative form this is indeed the golden rule of *Luke*: "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." In all treatments of fellow-beings Śākya's injunction also is "to put oneself in the place of others" (*attānam upamāṃ katvā*). We read in the *Dhammapada*:

"All men tremble at punishment, all men fear death: Putting oneself in the place of others, kill not nor cause slaughter."

"All men tremble at the rod, all men love life. Being as one would be done by, kill not nor cause to kill."

Reciprocity is thus the common golden rule of the three

¹ For an anthropological analysis of reciprocity as a universal social force, see R. C. Thurnwald, "Gegenseitigkeit im Aufbau und Funktionen der Gesellungen und deren Institutionen" in *Reine und Angewandte Soziologie*, Festgabe für Tönnies (Leipzig, 1936); see also C. Gide, *La Solidarité* (Paris, 1932).

world-religions. From the idealistic standpoint as represented, for instance, by Giorgio Del Vecchio in *Etica, Diritto, e Stato, il riconoscimento della identità sostanziale dell' essere di tutti soggetti* (the recognition of the substantial identity in being of all subjects or persons) constitutes the universal beginning of ethical principle. And this is why reciprocity which is based essentially on this feeling of identity may be taken to be so universally appreciated.

The formulation of this rule was the distinctive contribution of Confucius to Chinese life. His catechism of moral discipline points out further that the duties of universal obligation are five, and the moral qualities by which they are carried out are three. The duties are those between ruler and subject, between father and son, between husband and wife, between elder brother and younger, and those in the intercourse between friends. Intelligence, moral character and courage, these are the three universally recognized moral qualities of man. The performance of these duties is the *sine qua non* of "good manners" or propriety. In the Confucian system the tenet of reciprocity leads thus to the cult of "propriety." In the Śākya discipline also we have the same propriety in the doctrine of *sīla* (conduct). The path leading to the cessation of misery is described in the *Digha Nikāya* as consisting in right belief, right resolve, right speech, right behaviour, right occupation, right efforts, right contemplation and right concentration. It is obvious that some of the conditions stated here, especially those in regard to speech, behaviour and occupation, are other-regarding, i.e. have a social significance in the system of self-culture.

Lest the social energism of Śākya morals be ignored, it is necessary to point out that *appamāda* (vigilance, strenuousness and activity) is the first article in the Buddhist monk's creed of life. Śākya wanted his followers to be moral and intellectual gymnasts and "move about like fire." Such were the men who built the first hospitals of the world for men and animals, established rest-houses and planted trees for wayfarers, popularized the trial by jury and the methods of election, voting and quorum in democratic assemblies, and founded universities, academies and other seats of learning in India, China and Japan.

The Hindu doctrine of five *mahā-yajñas* (great sacrifices) teaches the householder to behave as a *debtor* to Nature, man and world, and to perform in discharge of his debts a number of duties every day such as render him virtually an embodiment of *le solidarisme social* (*Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*). The first sacrifice, "debt" (*ṛiṇa*) or duty is that to the *devas* (gods). The second consists in the study and teaching of *Brahman* (the sacred texts). The third sacrifice is that of propitiating the *pitrīs* (ancestors) with libations of water. The maintenance of the poor, the hungry and the destitute belongs to the next sacrifice, called the *nṛi-yajña* (sacrifice for man). And finally, the fifth or *bhūta-yajña* implies service to all created beings, the lower animals. Philanthropy and social service are thus linked up in the daily estimation of the Hindus with ancestor-worship, cultivation of learning and prayers to the gods in a scheme of religious discipline.

THE CATEGORIES OF RAMAKRISHNA AND VIVEKANANDA

The religious categories created by the human *psyche* are then as numerous as conceivable. And it is possible to discover virtually every category in one form or other among the diverse races of mankind, especially such as have well-developed systems on account of evolution through ages.

In modern times the religious tendency of men, as we may agree with Spranger,¹ has assumed a secular *Gestalt* whose contact with the metaphysical or speculative is not obvious. But even today, *aller echten Wissenschaft liegt ein religiöses Fundament zugrunde* (a religious basis is the foundation of all real science).

Religion and religious categories may, then, be described as some of *i residui constanti dei fatti sociali* (the constant residues of social facts), in Niceforo's words. These are the permanent, universal, invisible, *sottogiacenti* (underlying) and general categories to be discovered when one descends from the superficial into the depths of mentality and social life.²

¹ "Theorie und Ethos" in *Die Erziehung* (Leipzig), XI, 10-11, pp. 449, 456.

² "I Fatti costanti della Vita Sociale" in *Rivista di Psicologia* (Bologna, April-June, 1935).

Even without inventing a *totem*, popularizing a ritual, or establishing a god one can be worshipped as a saint, nay, as an *Avatāra*. For instance, Ramakrishna (1836-1886), who within fifty years of his death is being worshipped virtually as a god by a large section of the modern Hindus, owes his divinity or *Avatāra*-hood, if one may say so, not evidently to any miracles or messages of mystery, but, among other things, to such words of secular and practical wisdom as the following:

"Many with a show of humility say, 'I am like a low worm grovelling in the dust.' Thus always thinking themselves worms, in time they become weak in spirit like worms."¹

The *Avatāra*-hood of the modern Bengali saint is founded on inspiring talks like these which endow men and women with courage, strength and spirit of self-assertion. Among other "words of nectar" (*kathāmṛita*) that the world has got from Ramakrishna is to be mentioned a saying like the following:

"The mind is everything. If the mind loses its liberty, you lose yours. If the mind is free, you are free too."² This is the gospel—Fichtean³ as it is—that can energize the poor, the lowly, and the depressed enough to be able to combat the cruel conditions governing the society and rise above them all into the position of glory and world-conquest.

And if Ramakrishna has any god, it is to be found, as the masses understand it, in his epoch-making equation, *jīva* (man) = *Siva* (God). The divinity of man is the bed-rock of his teachings, profoundly democratic as they are.⁴

Let us take a category as propagated by Vivekananda, viz.:

"You will understand the *Gītā* better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger. You will understand the *Upanishads*

¹ *The Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna* (Advaita Ashram, Calcutta, 1934), No. 518.

² *Ibid.*, No. 514.

³ Fichte, *Reden an die Deutsche Nation* (1808), XIV.

⁴ B. K. Sarkar, *The Might of Man in the Social Philosophy of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda* (Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1936) and "Ramakrishna-Vivekananda and the Religion of Progress" (*Praḥuddha Bharata*, Calcutta, January, 1937).

better and the glory of the *Ātman* when your body stands firm upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men."¹

It is not of the gods and goddesses, the rituals and the ceremonies, the temples and the holy places that Vivekananda speaks. In his psycho-social *Gestalt* "it is an insult to a starving people to offer them religion; it is an insult to a starving man to teach him metaphysics."²

The creed of the Poor as God or the Divinity in the Poor (*Daridra-Nārāyana*) with which Vivekananda is associated in the milieu of middle and working classes as other teeming millions has enabled him to declare: "I do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to an orphan's mouth."³

One can read in this bit of Vivekanandism the romantic socialism of early nineteenth century Europe, and indeed the contents of the traditional five *mahā-yajñas* ("great debts") of the Hindus, if one wills.⁴

SOCIO-RACIAL DIVERSITIES A PERMANENT REALITY

From totemism to Buddhism, Catholicism, Islam and Vivekanandism man's creative or spiritual urges have given birth to a thousand and one religious categories. The contents of some of these categories are mystical and of others positivistic. And in every instance the *Gestalt* of religion is a psycho-social blend of heterogeneous strains. It is for every individual to choose the ones that he wishes. For, it is the privilege of man, using the words of Śākya the Buddha in the *Dhammapada*, to "rouse thyself by thyself" and "examine thyself by thyself." And "whoever shall be a lamp unto themselves shall reach the very topmost height" (*Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta*, II.35).

¹ *The Complete Works of Swami, Vivekananda* (Advaita Ashram, Mayavati), Vol. III (1932), p. 242.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I (1931), p. 18.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. V (1924), p. 39.

⁴ "In the doctrine of the five great sacrifices the entire world is a divinity. Whatever exists on earth is a god. Man has debts to everything. He has therefore to sacrifice something in favour of everybody and everything in order to repay those debts."—Ramendra Sundar Trivedi, *Yajña-Kathā* (Calcutta, 1921), p. 172.

And of course it has likewise ever been the privilege of man since Mohenjo Daro and earlier times to construct his own socio-economic and psycho-social *Gestalt* out of the natural and human, i.e. the regional and racial (or social) elements among the *viśva-śaktis* (world-forces). This cosmic privilege of the human race has found expression in our own times in Ramakrishna's enunciation of the pluralistic doctrine of *yata mat tata path* ('as many faiths, so many paths'). He has called upon mankind to look upon every faith as a path to God, thereby constructing a world-republic of religions.

Human logic is forced to realize once more that the diversities of the psycho-social, socio-economic and socio-racial *Gestalt*, in spite of the fundamental unity of the *psyche* and its constituents, are some of the permanent realities of world-evolution. It is on the postulate of world-embracing and full-blooded freedom in morality, of intensely diversified individualities in spiritual life, both personal and collective, as well as of the multiplicity of racial and social morphologies that the philosophy of inter-religious harmony and international concord may be established.

HUMANISM AND RELIGIOLOGY

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Our present-day interest in religions other than Christianity is actuated by two different motives. In the first place, in such religions we look for those elements which, through the channels of borrowing, affiliation and direct and indirect influences, have entered into the framework of our own Christian-Western-European tradition. We thirst after an all-sided comprehension of that tradition, and in that connection it seems indispensable to us to acquaint ourselves, above all, with Judaism and Hellenism as the historical substrata of Christianity; besides these the Iranian religion interests us as the religion which gave us the conception of Satan and the belief in the *Resurrectio Carnis*; lastly we study folklore and the surviving elements of paganism, which too entered into our religion.

The second motive of our religiological interests is exactly of an opposite kind; we search for not what is near our own and what is known, but just that which is foreign, far and different. This motive is undoubtedly the deeper and more real. It springs from the consciousness that we are shut up within the bounds of only one circumscribed tradition, that within that tradition only certain definite possibilities were realized, which are insufficient to give us a full conception of religious phenomena, and that we should emerge out of our own tradition in order to attain that 'fulness of human possibilities.' Judged in this light the religions of the Far East and India are of great moment to us—of great moment, above all, is Buddhism as the most profound and most fundamental antithesis to Christianity.

The large humanistic aspect in which we have learnt to look at religious phenomena is doubtless one of the most precious acquisitions of our modern civilization. It is to be added that this acquisition is a very fresh one, and is by no means easy.

The medieval Christian knew full well that he lived in a world surrounded by non-Christian peoples and societies—the unredeemed Pagans in the East of Europe and the Mohammedans to the South-West. Besides these, non-Christian elements were represented in Christendom itself by the Jews. Notwithstanding that, 'plurality of religions' had not yet presented itself as a problem for investigation, to European consciousness, which knew but one type of religion and naively identified Christianity (along with Mosaism as its foundation) with Religion in general.

It is surprising, however, that this self-seclusion of Christendom was not broken by the contact with Mohammedanism, which was indeed a direct contact, and as we see more and more clearly, a very intimate one. This can, nevertheless, be easily accounted for. In spite of the hatred, which neither of the two faiths spared the other, there existed between them a very large amount of similarity, supported on the one hand by the fact that both of them had their rise in the same sphere of the Oriental-Hellenistic culture, and on the other, by the no less important circumstance that Mohammedanism, while extending its conquests in Syria,

Palestine and Egypt, imbibed the entire theological acquisition of the oriental Christianity.

Fundamental changes were brought about by the great discoveries of the XVth and XVIth centuries, widening not only the geographical, but also the intellectual and the religious horizon of Europe. In that process of breaking down the barriers of the Middle Ages, no little part was played by the missionaries, among whom the Jesuits ranked in the first place. The enthusiasm, ardour, enterprise and courage of those religious conquistadors were really incomparable. In the year 1498 Vasco da Gama opened the sea-route to India, and fifty years later Saint Francis Xavier floated by the same route to Ceylon, India, China and Japan. In 1581 the Jesuits headed by Father Ricci arrived at Pekin in the guise of Buddhist monks. In 1624 the Portuguese Jesuit d'Andrada appeared in Tibet, and from the year 1719 missionary work was carried on by the Capuchin monk, Horatio della Penna. In this manner Christianity for the first time stood face to face with the great Asiatic religions, and in particular with Brāhmanism and Buddhism about which there were only vague notions found in the accounts given by Marco Polo of Venice (XIIIth cent.) and Odoric Pordenone (XIVth cent.).

The direct effect was a profound shock, fright and amazement, even to the point of a mental disorder. For a European of today it is difficult to feel the emotional reactions of those people with a strong faith, who were forced to convince themselves all of a sudden, that their world was but a small island cast in an ocean of paganism, in the midst of a chaos of the most peculiar cults and faiths, not only those which were primitive, as primitive religions could hardly be compared to Christianity, but also those which were highly evolved and could claim a comparison with Christianity and Catholicism. These were discovered specially in the Tibetan Lamaism with its Pope,—the Dalai-Lama—with its monasteries and monks, tonsure, rosary, belfry, incense and even a sort of eucharist, and with a ceremony consisting in giving to the believer, bread and wine for attaining a long life. When the first shock was allayed, it became necessary

to take a particular standpoint with regard to these disturbing facts, to explain their origin and import.

Theories and doctrines were found in the Christian tradition itself, inherited from the Church Fathers.

The first of these was the theory of the Satanic origin of all non-Christian religions, the theory which fundamentally denied to all religions other than Christianity, the character and value of a religion, thus making them non-religions, negative phenomena plain and simple, illusions produced by the malignity of the Devil. In this manner Early Christianity explained the Greek and Roman cults of pagan gods. While not denying the existence of the ancient inhabitants of Olympus, it degraded them to the position of demons, defeated by the light of the Christian faith. Saint Augustine in his *De civitate Dei* (ii. 25 & viii. 22), expressly stands by the same point of view which was really the living conviction not only of learned theologians, but also of the Middle Ages, as is evidenced by the legend of Tannhauser and the white demoness Venus. The discovery of new continents in the XVth and XVIth centuries was at once the discovery of new, unexpected expanses of the kingdom of Satan.

Saint Francis Xavier too did not regard his missionary activities in Japan otherwise than as a struggle with demoniac forces. In one of his letters carrying the news that the majority of the Japanese pay homage to Amita Buddha, he asks his readers to pray to Jesus Christ the Lord, in their own country, that He may have victory over that Demon. The passage on Japanese Buddhism in *The History of the Society of Jesus* by Daniello Bartoli (1653) is not less characteristic: "I can hardly refrain from stating not without justified surprise that that Demon, to the insult and shame of the Church of Jesus, wished to copy it there, at the earth's boundary, thus deforming it into something monstrous, substituting the mystery of faith by illusions, sacrament by superstitions, and ceremonies by blasphemy. All this was done with the intention that in case the knowledge of Christ did arrive there, it would be impossible to distinguish the unholy from the holy, and falsehood from truth."

It is needless to explain why this theory was unable to retain its hold even on the orthodox Catholic science. The fact that non-Christian religions were also religions was too evident, and the Devil as the general hypothesis began to lose its adherents even in Catholicism, in the epoch of Leibnitz and Newton. Moreover, in the traditions of theology and Christian apologetics, there was found another and more humanistic theory.

In the same work, *De civitate Dei* of Saint Augustine already cited above, we find the following exposition regarding the origin of the pagan divinities (iv.2): "That same God was called Jupiter in the etherial spheres, Neptune in the seas, Vulcan in fire, Bacchus in vintage, Diana in the woods and Minerva in science." This view is obviously not of Christian origin, but on the contrary it is the inheritance of the theosophical speculations of the Hellenic philosophers, stoics, neo-Platonists and neo-Pythagorians, who regarded all religions as leading to one ideal, to one truth and to the one highest Divinity. Adopted and transformed by Christian thought, it revived in the official theory of primordial revelation and the origin of all the religions of the world from a common source. In this modification there is no admissible statement that all religions are equally good, as there exists only one absolute religion, flowing straight out of the source of revelation and through the tradition of the Old as well as the New Testament, and living till today in the creed of the Roman Catholic Church. It is no less true, however,—and this is really an unheard-of progress in comparison with the theory of devilish caricature—that in all other religions, even in the most primitive ones, there is also a portion of that truth. "In things religious there is not an evil," affirms one of the authors of the middle of the XVIIth century,¹ "which is not the product of something good, and there are few errors which do not possess some fundamental truth wrongly understood or spoilt through the passage of time. In this manner indeed, fable, gods, their origin, their regions, their victories, those falsehoods of which the ancient poets

¹ An anonymous treatise, *Conformité des coutumes des Indiens Orientaux avec celles des Juito et autres Peuples de l'Antiquité*, reprinted in *Cérémonies et Coutumes Religieuses des Peuples Idolâtres, représentées par des figures dessinées de la main de Bernard Picard* (Amsterdam, 1735).

had sung,—all these became truth which is the source of religion professed by us even today. That truth is however so deformed by the pagans through imagination and fable which warp it, and its features are so changed, that it is almost impossible to recognize it."

We may add, in passing, that from that same intellectual atmosphere is derived the rationalistic theory, of 'natural religion' of the English deists, Voltaire, Rousseau and the encyclopaedists. They maintained that at the dawn of history, man possessed certain 'eternal truths—faith in one God and the immortality of the soul.' A further development of these is either a deformation of that ancient ideal or a preservation of it in its primitive excellence without change or transformation. Owing to the fundamental agreement in the negation of all evolution and all direction to a more and more perfect form through a historical evolution, there is no essential difference between the religiology of Voltaire and that of Catholicism. There are, on the other hand, differences and those to the clear disadvantage of the rationalistic position in all other points. Above all, Voltaire's conviction that all the so-called positive religions are mere clever frauds of priests and that the 'deformation' of natural religion was due to the invention of myths, cults, liturgical ceremonies, etc., can hardly stand criticism. It is needless to explain today that exactly these 'deformations' are the most real contents of religious phenomena, that a religion without cults ceases to be a religion in general, and that just this pseudo-religion which was in fact an anaemic metaphysical construction, was the rationalistic natural religion.

The speculations of theologians as to the consanguinity and connections between the revelation of the Old Testament and the other religions of the world, are obviously hardly better than attempts to derive all languages from Hebrew. If we hear of the comparison of Abraham and Brahman, not without some amusement, we ought to tell ourselves that we do not know whether our scientific points of view of today will not create the same impression in two hundred years' time. The Jesuit fathers, authors of the famous *Lettres Édifiantes*, knew of the Asiatic religions as much as it was possible to know in their times. It

is of little importance that unreal theories crept into the basis of facts insufficiently known. But important is that ideology of those theories, which taught the European to see men among pagans and religion in paganism. In the field of religiology it was undoubtedly a 'Copernican discovery.'

The XVIIIth century, as a matter of fact, brought not only the theory of primordial revelation, but at the same time also the first attempts at its liquidation as a consequence of the further widening of the humanistic horizon. In the year 1757 appeared the dissertation of David Hume's under the title of *A Natural History of Religion* in which the evolutionistic thesis was formulated for the first time. It treated the so-called 'primitive' religions not as corruptions of higher forms of religions, but as the necessary, preceding phases of those higher forms in their evolution. This point of view created a considerably wider foundation for a sympathetic understanding of the phenomena of exotic religions. To allow an analogy, one may say that if the theory of pre-revelation showed degraded relatives in other religions, the theory of evolution permits us equally to look upon them as younger sisters not yet grown up, but developing into the same fulness and perfection. In the beginning at any rate, after the first attempts at an orientation in the field of the new kind of comprehending things, the conviction as to the absolute value of Christianity still remained a self-evident truth. Out of these attempts, as one specially characteristic and historically important, should be mentioned the classification of religions given by Hegel in his famous *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (1832). In accordance with his 'dialectic method' Hegel distinguishes three phases in the evolution of religion: these are—(1) natural religions, (2) religions of spiritualized individuality and (3) absolute religions. The natural phase, in its turn, is composed of three stages, viz., direct religions, religions of substance and religions of fight for freedom. To the first stage belongs primitive magic, to the second, the religion of China (religion of moderation), Brāhmaṇism (religion of phantasy) and Buddhism (religion of being in itself). The third stage represents the religions of Iran (religion of light), of Syria (religion of pain)

and of Egypt (religion of riddle). Under the second phase, i.e. 'spiritualized individuality,' Hegel placed the Jewish religion as a religion of sublimity, the Hellenic religion as a religion of beauty, and the religion of Rome as a religion of convenience. The absolute religion, as ending the evolution, as the zenith and the realization of the ideal, is Christianity. There we do not propose to elucidate the meaning of the Hegelian classification. We should, however, point out that in fact, two very highly evolved religions, highly evolved in our present-day estimation, and most worthy of comparison with Christianity, viz. Brāhmanism and Buddhism, found a place with Hegel, very near magic, while a really primitive religion such as that of Egypt was promoted as the precursor of Judaism. We can forgive Hegel if we take into consideration the fact that in his days the knowledge of Buddhism and Brāhmanism was very imperfect, and information on the religions of the ancient East was equally far from being perfect. In those conditions, in an undertaking on such a large scale, miscomprehensions and mistakes were unavoidable. It is, therefore, more surprising that in many points his intuitive remarks on the religion of China were accurate.

Further development, going beyond the Hegelian historiography, is a passing into a complete evolutionism, a placing of Christianity on an equal footing with other religions in the historical series, a considering of its genesis and development in the wide, common field of the history of culture. In fact, this does not exclude either comparison and evaluation of opinions, although very subjective as a rule, or an eventual result that out of all existing religions of the world, Christianity is the most perfect, but it does exclude in principle all absolutization of any historical religions. Whether there is development or not is the question, but there is no question that Christianity, contrary to the strongest convictions of its first followers, is not the end of history, neither is it the fulfilment of times, but it is shut up within history. It depends and will depend on evolution. This is not admitted by confessional orthodoxy. Hence modern 'historicism' is the Rubicon dividing theological and secular religiologies, it is the critical point where part the ways of the apologist and

the historian-humanist for whom latter religions are just as 'human' as art, science, poetry and philosophy. To obscure or to cloud this state of things is neither honest nor fruitful, but we can and should make it clear that this historical standpoint with regard to all religions, though not confessional, must not at any rate be anti-religious.

We should have to wander very far, if we tried to describe here the birth of the secular religiology of the past century, its triumphs in the researches in oriental religions, its tragedy and conflicts in the field of biblical exegesis, and finally its influence on Catholic and Protestant theologies. It would have been easy in that case to prove that the considerable majority of religiolgists, not excluding Ernest Renan and Alfred Loisy,¹ are neither atheists nor materialists, but people with an intimate personal religious life and a subtle intuition for religious phenomena. For, so much should be clear for everybody, that just as a historian and theorist of poetry, setting before himself the task of fighting and discrediting poetry is unimaginable, so equally unthinkable is a religiolgist, taking the position that religions are 'the hashish of nations' and 'survivals of barbarism.'

Out of a number of witnesses, let us allow two to speak, viz. Emil Durkheim and Hermann Usener. In the introduction to his well-known work, *The Elementary Forms of a Religious Life* (2nd edition, 1925), Durkheim remarks that he intends to study a religion, the most primitive according to him, viz. Australian totemism, not for the sheer pleasure of telling interesting things, but with the conviction that by following that way he may be able to throw some light on the essence of Religion. This thesis, continues Durkheim, is ready to call forth oppositions. For is it possible to compare the highest form of religion with the lowest, without degrading the former to the level of the latter? And further, is not the statement that the wild cults of Australian tribes could help an understanding of Christianity, for instance, a supposition that Christianity originated from the same mentality and arose out of the same superstitions, and that it rests upon

¹ Professor of Religiology at the College de France, author of *The Birth of Christianity, Mandaim and the Beginnings of Christianity, The Gospel and the Church*, etc.

the same mistakes? Is it not a symptom of irreligiousness to attribute theoretical importance to primitive religions in this manner? Durkheim states that he has no intention to inquire whether there exist religiologists who could be accused on such a charge and who really made out of religiology an instrument of struggle with religion. At any rate he himself denies any such charge, as he says, "It is a fundamental postulate of sociology that no human institution could rest on error and falsehood. It could not last, if it were not grounded in the nature of things—in something real and true." Undoubtedly, if one keeps to the letter of a formula, then religious beliefs and practices sometimes lose their track to such an extent that one is prompted to attribute to them a kind of some deep-rooted aberration. But "through symbol one should attain the reality which it represents, and which gives it its real significance." The most barbarous and the most peculiar rituals are explained by certain human needs, a certain view on life either individual or social. And for that reason, Durkheim finishes his argument—"There is no religion which is false. Each one is true in its own way, each one answers, though in a different manner, to given conditions of human existence."

And these are the remarks of the no less famous German religiologist, Herman Usener (1834-1905), from his article "Mythology," published a year before his death—"The mind reaches farther than the eye, but it cannot see God and what is Divine except in images. This was admitted by apostle Paul with all the force of his faith. All our religious ideas are images of the same form as Christ, the apostles and the oldest church partly created themselves and partly accepted from the Old Testament, and as still today they are brought to light from the depths of our consciousness. It seems to be a trivial truth and it is such in reality. But how many are there, capable of drawing any right conclusion out of it? If the contents of all religious ideas consist not in acts of cognition but in images, then science has the right and obligation to treat the ideas of our religion too as 'mythologems,' as products of myth-creating phantasies." And again: "Complaints are useless. We ought to understand

that all that man created, be it the best, does not have an eternal duration nor any eternally binding force. A great many images through which we conceive of Divinity, are obsolete and are no longer sufficient for us."

Let us compare these two enunciations, though very different in tone, yet related in spirit and content. They both proclaim the necessity of applying one and the same humanistic measure for all religions, both include all religions in the aspect of history, and at the same time they both accord to all religions their relative value of "symbols" through which human societies, in a given situation, a given epoch and a given cultural *milieu*, expressed their needs and their religious experiences. In spite of oneself, one remembers the ideas and the points of view of the neo-Platonists about the "hypostases" of one Divinity, of the stoics about the one Divine Reason which pervades the entire universe and which men worship under different names.

Besides the above, an Indologist is reminded of the philosophical speculations of the Vedānta and of Buddhism about the inexpressible Absolute, speculations of which such a clear exposition was given by Swami Vivekananda: "For a Hindu the entire religious world is but a wandering, a self-elevation through different conditions and circumstances, to that same ultimate goal. Every religion is an evolving of a God out of the material man and the same God is the inspirer of all religions."

Who knows whether this position is not at the same time the highest position humanity can take before the fact of religion? It is in any case, much nobler than the somewhat Talmudic wisdom as found in Lessing's parable of the "three rings."¹

THE DRAMA OF MANKIND IN ITS RELIGIOUS ASPECT

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An age which is swiftly passing away hoped to discover reliable laws of the world-process from the natural sciences, and

¹ Cf. G. E. Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*, III Act.

to construct an exact mechanism of animal-and-plant-life as well as of the cosmos and the atom. It meant to dispense entirely with religion in any form. This mentality boasted to have discovered laws of human conduct depending only on materialistic and economic principles, and to be able to direct man's life like a steam engine. This attempt is like that of a magician who intends to produce rain by pouring water over a crystal of quartz. Human life cannot be directed so easily, as more thorough investigations prove. Human life requires unbiased studies. The natural sciences teach us some phenomena and processes, but the more we apprehend them, the more we ask questions which cannot be answered.

It is a fundamental fact of all times that man depends on powers which he cannot think of controlling. His existence not only is due to the conditions of his environment, but also is primarily the result of biological factors. Whether we are born as cripples or endowed with brilliant gifts, it does not depend on us. We cannot determine our maturing age or our senility, nor can we dispose of our health or disease. Our drives and our desires are merely stimulated and enhanced by the surrounding world, but the particular kind of reaction proceeds from our physical and mental system, from ourselves. Our thoughts are beyond our command. Remember the words: 'It thinks within me.' Although we mean to 'act as we wish,' we must not forget that our wishes are brooded in the unconscious depths of our mind. More or less incoherently the one or the other impulse rises to the surface without our control, incites our intellect, and coagulates to wilful action. What is 'our own' part of it? Becoming conscious of this lack of control is a particular source of religiosity. We feel ourselves in the hand of powers which dominate us and with which we constantly have to deal.

In social life the thoughts and actions of many people are entwined. Man lives in aggregations of various forms of complexity, duration and size. In a family the personalities of the two sexes complement each other as well as the age-groups of elders and children, and a family lasts as long as its members live, particularly its head. A clan is not tied up with the

existence of a restricted number of individuals, but is composed of the ever-changing families which increase or die out, split up or unite. People in a village community under the leadership of a headman collectively defend their district and represent a political body composed sometimes of several divisions of clans. A state embraces many communities and organizations of various sorts. There are craftsmen and traders, factories and plants, workmen organized in unions, associations of cults, societies for training the body, educational institutions, associations for idealistic purposes, political parties and so on. The same person participates in a number of these aggregations at the same time—as the member of a family, as the inhabitant of a village, as a trader, as the supporter of a political party, as the citizen of a state.

Man's behaviour in his family differs from that while pursuing his trade, or as a companion of his friends. Each aggregation demands only certain functions of a man. People become members of an aggregation by performing certain functions only. In performing these functions a regulated behaviour is required. Such a behaviour consists in the observance of rules, of avoidances (taboos), and in carrying out certain duties. In most cases, particularly in primitive societies, these regulations have grown without purposeful planning. They are the result of interactions of individuals which complement one another, and check and limit one another's spheres. As a man never disposes fully of his thoughts and actions, and as his reactions are conditioned by his whole personality, the reciprocal interactions of men cannot be altogether consciously directed. Nor have the forms of family life, of clans, of kinship groups, of economic organizations, of political chieftainships and the like, been consciously invented. Exactly as man forms new devices, he also produces aggregations and their particular configurations, as the result of his endowment. The moulding of these aggregations does not lie in his wilful power. He will not intentionally act in a different manner. Otherwise he will cease to be what he is.

Human life runs through an enormous number of situations, and each one requires its own decision. Among a group of people one man may be quicker in grasping the situation and in

acting more efficiently than others. If he is able to express the trend of thought dominating his group, he acquires prestige and becomes a leader of his community. His decisions, however, are liable to be modified by interference from outstanding persons of his group or from outside. They, therefore, cannot be regarded as simply expressing his impulses, but are modified by intelligent deliberations. His whole personality will be brought to bear upon his decisions. It does not matter whether he is more or less conscious of the near consequences of his words or actions.

The decisions may, however, entrain far-reaching consequences for a number of other situations and even for other aggregations. One decision, by repetition, becomes automatized in the individual and conventionalized in the community. Only unusual situations need a new decision.

In his deliberations the model thinker or model actor will never be able to pay attention to the conditions of a great number of other groups and localities. He will be unable to gauge the effects radiating from his actions upon many other groups which may be involved in some way or other. The less will he be able to fathom the repercussions of his decision upon the various social units, since he lacks sufficient information about them. His decision, therefore, must be 'intuitive,' it never can be exactly calculated.

Moreover, a constant change takes place in the persons who compose an aggregation: men are born and they die, they grow older, one replaces another, they associate and dissociate. The function of the individual in the aggregation, therefore, changes with the lapse of time. The alteration of the biological condition in the person does not, however, coincide with the change of situation of the aggregation—be it a community, an association, or an economic organization. Out of that arise conflicts which are beyond human control. The persons composing an aggregation are its ultimate instance, but at the same time are an uncertain and delusive factor in it.

The aggregation asserts its existence by the regulations, rules and patterns which have become its spiritual framework and to which its members have to conform, this framework being the

narrow line of demarcation within which the usual actions may develop. In spite of that a person of sufficient prestige, even prompted by personal whims, not necessarily on account of objective motives, may break a rule, a taboo or a tradition. The individual in such a case challenges his community, and if conditions are favourable he may succeed. He may be a magician, a chieftain, or any person of established or growing influence. But the community's disposition to accept a break is not only due to the prestige it accords the man, but also to a sentimental preparedness with regard to the particular rule or habit which has begun to grow 'obsolete.' Consider, for example, the reasons which induced Henry VIII of England to disrupt England's relations with the Holy See and favour Protestantism.

There is, however, not only the question of leaders of big areas, but also of the host of petty leaders in a hundred trades and spheres in each community. What is true of a leader is true also of them all. Out of their interplay we may construe a 'mechanism' of interaction. Trying to do that, we must employ our sagacity in order to lift into consciousness processes which are constantly going on without being noticed. The bearing of inter-individual actions upon the aggregation escapes our attention as well as the inter-group actions in their effect upon the more comprehensive community. The feeling of reciprocal interdependence between the self-asserting units, be they persons or groups, is generally deeply clouded by their ego-centricity and narrow-mindedness. This is, in fact, the pest which inserts its virus into all aggregations, impedes their smooth functioning and prevents the establishment of a balance between the ranges of the individual ego and the collective ego.

It has often struck me how little those groups and aggregations of men know about one another, although living side by side in the same place or in the same community. They do not even care to know. Their ego-centricity holds sway over them. Vanity and envy, suspicion and ambition dominate their sentiments and dread creates hostility. They retard progress which consists in a wider co-operation between groups.

I need not, in our age, depict the infection caused by ego-centric and narrow-minded attitudes upon nations and groups. Has it been different in other epochs of history? As far as I can see, essentially not. But there have been periods of crises alternating with more settled and quiet periods. Both these periods are characterized by virtues and vices. Quiet times indulge in debauchery and squandering, and in prejudice and rigidity of thought, while periods of transition are filled with destruction not only of the obsolete but also of things of permanent value, and are saturated with fanatic struggles not only for ideas but also for illusions.

Commenting on happenings of history, we cannot use such attributes as 'good' and 'bad,' and we must not wrap ourselves up in ego-centric sentiments and resentments. We should conceive of man as part of nature (in a way as expressed and symbolized in the Hindu religion). Man's shortcomings and passions, his sufferings and struggles in the long run produce beneficial effects and are like hard exercises of his body invigorating his system. The individual case finds its explanation in connection with the flux of events. Periods of decay and degradation lead to resurgence and improved association. Analyses of social life and of history are conducive to soundness of judgment on the events around us. We shall not be praising or condemning people any more than the sun or the moon, the thunderstorm or the movements of the atom.

Trying to take a detached view of social processes, past and contemporaneous, we bow in veneration before the superhuman power that directs the fate of man 'from inside,' as a force active in him, and which at the same time permeates everything around him. Being conscious of that, we cannot help asserting ourselves in this world. When our life becomes involved in the actions of our neighbours, it may become imperative on us to influence others. If the life of the groups with which our existence is associated is at stake, we shall interpose ourselves. For, the continuation and procreation of our life is bound up with the groups in which we participate. Hence a dilemma may arise between the process of which we feel ourselves to be a minute

part and of which we conceive a limited division by our intellect, on the one side, and our ego-centric self-assertion on the other.

Man on his path is always vexed by this dilemma. As a result of this the groups have produced moral demands. Not only that, sages have outlined ideals of how man should live and act. These men acquired disciples and even masses of followers. But even the disciples failed to live up to the ideals of their master. The masses were loathe to conform to, even unable to understand, the teaching which under the sway of suggestion they had accepted. The growth of morals is different in the various aggregations and systems of cultures as well as in their individual representatives. Hard and slow is the way of high morals to enter into the hearts and actions of men. I often wonder whether it would not be better to lower the demands and instead give them a broader expansion.

Terrible storms of pathological passions have swept over great portions of mankind from time to time. It seems deplorable that neither prayer nor moral preaching, nor sacrifices nor intellectual teaching, nor contemplation nor meditation could serve as barriers to the flood of destructive mass emotions ; on the contrary, such eruptions sometimes carried away whatever there was rooted in men as morals and religion.

We only wonder how quickly morals and religion were restored after the cyclone had gone. The forces intrinsic in man cannot for any length of time be obscured. The destruction of certain forms of culture and its morals may be useful for adaptation of life to new conditions of existence. Monstrous and dreadful power of evil, and prodigious and stupendous power for good are both innate in man. Neither self-control of the individual, nor the suggestive power of a leader, nor the code of regulations of a group is able to avert the rapacious floods of emotion. In such moments man himself is awe-inspiring. Our mind becomes painfully conscious of being dependent on forces to which we fall an easy prey. It becomes all the more agitated, since in the drama of mankind we are not only spectators but also actors.

This consciousness of uncontrollable forces stimulates phantasy and reasoning. It results in an interpretation of these

unknown or dreaded forces—the formulation of theories about the manner in which they act on man. Such an interpretation by man employs the symbols of his particular culture and is based on the knowledge of his times. He must use words and symbols for communicating concepts to his particular group. His intellectual means of transmission of ideas is bound up with the manner of thinking and the degree of analysis attained in the culture to which he belongs.

Such intellectual expressions and symbols can, however, but inadequately explain or describe the superhuman and trans-human powers, their relation to man and the inspiration he derives from them. Interpretations will differ according to the civilization, culture and men aggregated in a society. Why should one decry another? They all mean the same. In fact translation from one language into another is not sufficient, if not accompanied by a rendering of the exact meaning of symbols and their esoteric implications. Only this would convey the fundamental feeling.

Each race, each nation, exhibits a uniqueness of personality and cultural achievement, of behaviour and social regulations, and of morals. In spite of this there is a vast common ground of humanity which tends to a complementary interlocking between the individual groups as well as between individual men.

Neither the universe nor the atom can teach us so much religion as an insight into the drama of mankind, its social adventures at different epochs and in various races and nations. The universe is far and the atom is almost inconceivable, but by human fate we are touched personally. Environment may do much for a man, but it is the ego that is enigmatic ; it contains the abyss of human emotions and passions which remind us of the danger of their violent outburst.

Man may feel that his external fate is not in his hands, but he becomes aware that even the reins of his own intentions slip out of his hands. He sometimes acts as if driven by a ' *daimonion* ' (as Socrates conceived it)—by a force acting in himself either for good or for evil.

Becoming conscious of all this, men have drawn encourage-

ment from their way of interpreting their particular destiny. Such an interpretation is a compass in the desert of perplexity and helps to make decisions. It delivers man from the depressive feeling of being inexorably doomed to a blind fate.

The present age presents a hundred social and political problems. Co-operation is needed between groups, communities, nations and races. Shall we be able to bring it about? Can a *daimonion* ' which springs from an understanding of the religious meaning of the drama of mankind be tuned to a reciprocal understanding among a number of outstanding persons in various nations?

UNITY OF RELIGIONS

SWAMI VISWANANDA

Ramakrishna Ashram, Bombay

The primitive man must have been overawed by the very magnitude of the universe. The civilized man is struck by the reign of law in the different departments of nature. The terrible exactness with which the sun rises and sets, the moon waxes and wanes, the seasons follow one another, and a thousand and one phenomena occur cannot but convince a rational being that there is a supreme intelligence behind the administration of the universe. I am not going to speak to you on the genesis of religious consciousness. I am going to speak to you a few words on the unity of religions. The need of the hour is to discover the golden thread running through all the religions.

I shall be a man dissatisfied rather than a pig satisfied; I shall be a Socrates dissatisfied rather than a fool satisfied. Reason and intellect are the two special attributes which can lead a man to certain heights, but he cannot be satisfied unless and until he has known the First Cause, the ultimate Reality which is the explanation of all that is going on about him, which is the source of the universe. All the great religions of the world are founded on the experience and realization of individuals or groups of individuals who claim that they have known this First Cause,

that they have seen God face to face. This effort to know the Unknowable, to realize the Reality is the very core of all religions. In this age of Empiricism and Positivism, in this age of Atheism and Agnosticism there was born a man in this country in whose name this Parliament of Religions has been convened—Sri Ramakrishna, who claimed to have seen God, to have conversed with Him, to have established relationship with Him. It was a hard job for Sri Ramakrishna to convince a robust rationalist and full-blooded Spencerian like Vivekananda that he had seen God and conversed with Him. Not content with the realization of *samādhi*, Ramakrishna wanted to know what truth there was in other religions. He was like a glutton who was never satisfied with a few dishes: he wanted to taste more and more. He became a Christian, he became a Mohammedan and by practising these religions he came to the same realization that he had attained through Hinduism. It is therefore in the fitness of things that a Parliament of Religions is being held in his name, as it should be.

Every religion has three aspects, philosophical, mythological and ritualistic. In philosophy, in their fundamental, basic principles, all the religions are almost the same. But every religion in the hands of narrow-minded bigots and fanatics becomes an engine of oppression. It is religion that has created all that is beautiful, all that is sublime in human civilization ; it is religion again, that has destroyed them. It is religion that has created love and brotherliness even for the most distant peoples of the earth; and it is religion again, that makes a man behave like a ferocious brute, even with his neighbour. But those who have tasted the kernel of religion, it is they who, in this destructive world torn by hatred and dissension, manifest love, sympathy and compassion and assure the world that in their philosophy, all religions are almost the same. So it is that in fundamentals, in basic principles, all religions are almost one. All the prophets and messengers of light claim to have gone to a height where they held communion with God, which Vivekananda described as a state of superconsciousness. It is only when we come to the mythological and ritualistic aspect of religion that we create differences and dissensions.

Let us try to go to the fundamentals and basic principles of all religions and march onward and Godward with charity for all and malice towards none.

THE IDEA OF RELIGION

PROF. LEOPOLD VON WIESE

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Over all individual religions stands the idea of Religion. It is its tenet that human life has not its last significance and meaning in the frame of this visible and transitory world, but that the aim of this earthly existence lies in a destination beyond it, which our intellect cannot grasp. We know nothing seizable about this destination, we rather are dependent on faith or presentiment, and on only an insufficient interpretation. Such defective interpretations are the contents of the individual religions.

Out of the knowledge of such imperfect certainty of these interpretations the doubt arises as to whether the transference of the essence of human life to a metaphysical realm may not be an error originating from feebleness. Since from haughtiness and selfishness we may not be willing to regard a bare earthly and ever imperfect existence as worth living, we cannot help inventing an ultramundane significance of being. Therefore, not seldom, the modern world has a trend to consider as a more dignified conduct to renounce an aim of life which, indeed, may be deeper and nobler than every earthly one but seems to be too improbable and unintelligible. Today there is a tendency totally to transfer the significance of human existence to the earthly world, indeed, not often to the sphere of the individual man, but mostly to the great social structures, particularly to the nation, the people and the race. It may not be necessary, in order to make the individual more unselfish and high-minded, to transfer the essence of existence to the supernatural world. The great social generation-structures, outlasting millenniums, are so constituted that the faith in them evolves the same ethical power as the religions do. The advantage of such a worldly and political conviction, compared

with a metaphysical religion, is its greater clarity. From there a greater veracity may arise.

Indeed, today the faith in a supernatural world is not in the same degree superseded (as in the nineteenth century) by a materialistic individualism as by the deification of social institutions. It is obvious that in this way the individuals are more forced into the service of social tasks and community life than by any other system. The utilization of personal powers for the purposes of the state and the people makes for great progress. The disadvantage, however, of this change lies in the fact that all social structures ever remain imperfect and that none can ever engender the sublime power of Divinity. Though we may never completely grasp the whole power of God, we realize that all social institutions, compared with the power of God, remain feeble and transitory. Social structures cannot be perfected, when they pass off for the last values and the last aims, except only when they serve as vessels for God's will and when they enjoin on themselves a religious mission which cannot be derived from natural forces, but from the manifestations of Religion.

What concerns the individual in the matter of a purely earthly-social aiming may satisfy the intellect for a short while because of the greater tangibility of the ends. Besides, the depreciation of human personality to a mere mean tool, created for the service of earthly social structures, makes man inwardly poor, narrow and hard. Therefore, also, his social value becomes diminished, and the great social structures, grown so as to form the very centres of ethical life, are gradually reduced in efficiency. Even the advantage of greater clarity proves delusive, because the social structures lose their significance when they become self-sufficient.

We realize that none of these interpretations of life—the religious, the social-earthly and the individualistic-materialistic—can be wholly understood in a purely rational manner and that none of the three attempts can be self-sufficient. We are always dependent on faith and presentiments. It is erroneous to think that we shall gain more clarity by transferring the centre of existence into the realm of earthly-social life. We merely become weaker. Vital forces stronger than death are for ever only those of Religion.

CHAPTER VII

SECTION II

Religion and Culture

ARCHITECTURE AND RELIGION

(A Lantern Lecture)

SRIS CHANDRA CHATTERJEE

*Sthapātya Visarada, Architect, Founder of Chatterjee School of
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In this age of racial recrimination, religious bigotry and social intolerance when, in the garb of progress, rank materialism and barbarity have been threatening to undermine all that human culture has produced in past ages, India's contribution to the evolution of a world-architecture, which is in progress, will be emblematic of the coming human family, and help in its advent. It is for the India that has produced Buddha and Aśoka, Sri Ramakrishna and Mahatma Gandhi, to take a prominent part in working out a cultural synthesis worthily representing the fundamental unity of humanity and of all their faiths, so as to engender lasting peace and harmony on earth. And architecture, which is a mature fruit of the tree of civilization, an embodiment of the human passion for truth and beauty, is the fittest among all the fine arts to give form and inspiration to the spirit of international fellow-feeling. India's broad, spiritual outlook on life, reflected and symbolized in the world-architecture of tomorrow, would guide the liberator along the way to the solution of the problems confronting human society which at present are menacing man's very existence. That such spiritual outlook is a need of the times is amply evident from the fact that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa who taught the world religious toleration and universal amity has found his way into the hearts of the peoples of all lands.

Architecture may be considered as the culmination of the cultural aspiration of a nation. It has always marched with the progressing culture of the ages, giving shape to evolving human ideals and faiths. In this era of so-called modern civilization and material progress—mechanical and scientific—the question that confronts us is, what should be the outlook of the new architecture?—

will the development of ancient architecture be consistent with this age of mechanical civilization? Or would not rather the creation of an altogether new architecture, uprooting old traditions, make for mutual approach in the cause of human progress, peace and goodwill!

But one may question what is really the ideal of the modern civilization on which the World-Architecture is to be based. Great physicists like Eddington and Jeans and great psychologists like Jung and Meader have signed the peace treaty between Religion and Science. Simultaneously with this reconciliation between science and religion have been noticed the first indications of a spiritual awakening in the West through Art.

Architecture is a great agency for evoking the spirit of international brotherhood. The ideal of brotherhood is the more readily advanced through art, because thereby we experience both inwardly and outwardly the revelation of the Commonwealth of Beauty, whose inheritors we are. The evolution of humanity and civilization culminates in Beauty and Art. There is no question that Beauty and Art are the great factors in the new conception of life with the ideal of service to humanity—they are the prime movers in the approaching evolution. Seers like Tolstoy considered art as the means of ending hostility and warfare.

The evolution of the new era rests on the cornerstone of Knowledge and Beauty. The religion, which ceases to enunciate a sterile dogma and foster a spirit of destructive bigotry, the philosophy which establishes a truly intellectual communion between man and nature, and the science which correlates human activities with the spirit of the melody of Nature would contribute to international brotherhood and inter-religious harmony in the approaching new era, when wedded to the intuitive humanization through Truth and Beauty—which is Architecture and Art.

Art has a profound relationship with Religion, relating as it does to the fundamental experiences of the human soul in its communion with God. Architecture to be true to itself must be characterized by that aesthetic and spiritual appeal which frees the mind of the onlooker from the shackles of materialistic influence. It must, as Ruskin observes, kindle the lamps of sacrifice, Truth,

Power and Beauty. In past ages Architecture was employed as one of the principal means of worshipping God and Nature, and it stood as an embodiment of Devotion and Sacrifice. Had it catered merely to the material needs of man for leading a mere barrack life, adhering to conditions of economy, utility, commercialism and industrialism, which appears to be the aim of ultra-modern sky-scrappers of this relentless age of machine and commerce, the glorious architecture of bygone ages in which every nation takes pride would never have reared its head. Architecture is still a living art in India, but in the absence of encouragement by the peoples, and particularly by the state, it has been fast approaching oblivion. India is in urgent need of a national school of neo-Indian architecture which must be Indian first, but which must not on that account neglect to take the fullest advantage of modern materials and modern methods of construction, while not disregarding the study of ancient Indian materials and specifications which made old Indian structures so wonderfully durable. The programme of such a national school should be to develop indigenous styles in accordance with modern needs. It is only in this way that India can succeed in really giving to the world what she has to offer for the evolution of a spiritually great and humane world-architecture. The proposed school, it is hoped, will not forget such necessary objects while building deep a strong foundation "for a hall for all the arts—spiritual, impersonal, inter-racial, eternal—the arts which are life-givers to men's souls, wearied now with the artificialities and bitterness of the modern scramble." A World-Architecture with its roots in Indian traditions, fed by materials brought from the Occident, may be expected to evolve in India.

I am in possession of enthusiastic appreciations of Indian Architecture by some of the foremost architects, art-critics, University Chancellors and distinguished savants of England, France, Germany, Russia, Sweden, Greece, Italy, Hungary, Siam, Malay Archipelego and Japan. Each and every civilized nation has been looking forward to the re-establishment of Indian Architecture through the agency of a National School of Indian Architecture. It is for all lovers of Indian art and culture,

irrespective of caste, creed and colour, to combine and organize the institution.

All lovers of Indian art would note with deep satisfaction the very valuable and instructive remarks made by His Excellency the Marquis of Linlithgow as Governor-General of India: "It will be in keeping with experience in many countries and in many ages, if it should emerge that the present phase of intense political activity is to be followed by a quickening of the creative impulse in the field of indigenous art and literature. Nothing could give me higher satisfaction than that I should be privileged to foster and encourage a movement of that nature."

Restoration of the traditions of India's glorious arts and crafts would certainly be appreciated by the world at large.

In reviewing some Modern Indian architectural designs by an Indian architect, which were exhibited in the Roerich Museum, New York, Dr. Harvey Wiley Corbett wrote in the American periodical, *Architecture*, with reproductions of some of the designs and photographs of constructions:—

"We of the West, especially in the United States, concerned primarily with our own progress, commercial and cultural, immersed in our own problems and difficulties, are hardly conscious of India with her teeming population, two or three times the size of our own. Here is the oldest continuing civilization of which we have a record, sculpture, painting, crafts that have been slowly developing through the centuries, while we pride ourselves on our achievements of two hundred years at the most.

"India is threatened by the march of Western civilization. The world may lose so much of real value in art, philosophy and spiritual force the true functional expression of a people rests in its architecture and allied arts. Their spiritual and philosophical beliefs are best expressed through this medium. While India must come abreast of modern trends in town-planning, sanitation and commercial development, through the preservation of her arts she will retain her individuality as a people, and therefore, retain for the world those rare qualities of spiritual value which the onrush of industrialism has so seriously threatened. . ."

As the President of the Architectural League of New York,

and as the Chairman of the Architectural Commission of the last Great World Fair in Chicago, Dr. Corbett has spoken words of unqualified praise on the aesthetic and spiritual value of Indian indigenous architecture and expressed his implicit confidence in the bright future of Modern Indian Architecture.

Yes, India has immense treasures, material and spiritual, to offer to the International Temple of Arts. If, as is generally conceded, Architecture is the mother of all the fine arts, each of which she has always drawn to herself for her own purposes, thereby stimulating every one of them, then India can no longer afford to remain indifferent to the duty of re-establishing its own place—a most important place—in the architectural activities of the world. If India allows herself to remain obsessed with the march of mere materialistic civilization, the world, as Dr. Corbett has eruditely pointed out, will lose so much of supreme value in philosophy and art, and in general the spiritual forces that make for the real progress of humanity. In the New-World-Architecture which is in the making, attention must needs be given, therefore, to the claims of Indian architecture

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

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The dictionary definition of the two words of the title of this paper is as follows:—

SCIENCE, knowledge, comprehension or understanding of truth or facts by the mind. (The dictionary adds the Science of God must be perfect).

RELIGION, as distinct from theology, is godliness or real piety in practice.

If we agree with these definitions, it appears impossible to accept any code of religion, which does not consider as important the comprehension and understanding of truth, which is the beacon light of the scientific mind.

Unfortunately for several centuries, the men concerned with religious organizations, specially in Europe, imprisoned, tortured and even hunted to death the seekers after truth. Even at the present moment in many quarters religion and science are considered antagonistic rather than approaching the same goal.

Roughly the scientific workers may be classified into three categories. First of all is the naturalist who seeks knowledge for its own sake for the joy of making discourses, irrespective of personal gain. He is patient, hard-working and entirely devoted to work. He is of the opinion that no sacrifice of time and money is too much if he can discover a scientific truth. In these days of materialism such lovers of truth may be regarded as human beings who are to be pitied by an average man, who cannot understand why anyone should devote himself to an object which does not bring personal or public gain.

The second class of scientific workers are well described by Sir Richard Gregory in the following words:—

“Of a different type is the iconoclast—the breaker of images—rebellious against authority, impetuous to prove that old idols are false, impatient with the world because of its indifference to the new gospel he has to teach. This man is not content to see things for himself; he desires to convince others of the truth revealed to him, and single-handed he is prepared to storm the citadel of traditional belief. In all ages he is a disturber of the peace, and is as unwelcome in scientific circles today, as he was to the contemplative philosophers of the middle ages or before. But be assured of this: you may crucify the body of such an apostle or you may visit him with the despair that follows upon neglect, but if his torch has been lighted from the divine flame of truth and righteousness, it cannot be extinguished.”

To this class belonged G. Bruno, an Italian astronomer, who was born (about 1550 A.D.) seven years after the death of Copernicus, and who published a work on the “Infinity of the Universe and of Worlds.” Bruno had become a Dominican, but he was doubtful about many religious dogmas held in his time. As he did not bother to be cautious about expressing his views, he was castigated by the spiritual authorities of his time, and had to run

away from Italy and take refuge in Switzerland, France, England and Germany. In the end he was brought down to Italy and imprisoned. After two years of imprisonment he was brought before his judges and found guilty and excommunicated. As he refused to recant his views, he was delivered to the Governor of Rome in 1600 with the usual recommendation that he be punished "with as great clemency as possible, and without effusion of blood." This recommendation meant in those days that the offender had to be burnt alive at the stake. As he was definitely convinced of the accuracy of his views about the Universe, and of his innocence and the strength of his position, he is said to have uttered the memorable words, "You who sentence me are in greater fear than I who am condemned." Fear of torture or death did not form a part of Bruno's make.

For the freedom of thought and expression of truth he had to die; and true philosophy lies hidden in the following words uttered by him before he was burnt at the stake:

"I have fought, that is much—victory is in the hands of Fate. Be that as it may with me, this at least future ages will not deny of me, be the victor who may—that I did not fear to die, yielded to none of my fellows in constancy and preferred a spirited death to a cowardly life."

The position of martyrs has been well stated in these words by Draper:

"No one can recall without sentiments of pity the sufferings of these countless martyrs, who first by one party, and then by another, have been brought for their religious opinions to the stake. But each of these had in his supreme moment a powerful and unfailing support. The passage from this life to the next, though this is a hard trial, was the passage from a transient trouble to eternal happiness, an escape from the cruelty of earth to charity of heaven. On his way through the dark valley the martyr believed that there was an invisible hand that would lead him, a friend that would guide him all the more gently and firmly because of the terrors of the flames."

It is rather extraordinary that the position of Bruno in 1600 A. D. was similar to that of Jesus Christ fifteen centuries

earlier in the hall of Caiaphas, the high priest, or in that of Pilate, the Roman Governor of Jerusalem. It is an irony of fate that the followers of Jesus Christ burnt Bruno for preaching the gospel of truth and freedom of thought.

Most men of science steer a middle course in their attempt to discover truth. From whatever side Nature is approached for truly understanding her, obstacles arise which check a clear vision of Nature. A great deal of patience and labour is necessary to go one step further than the existing knowledge.

In India, there has been very little personal persecution by the priestly class for holding unorthodox and independent views. As a matter of fact in the Buddhistic period, the cultivation of experimental science, surgery and medicine was encouraged by the priests, many of them being themselves adepts in experimental science. The Buddhist missionaries wielded great influence on the masses by appealing to their moral instincts. Persuasion, and not persecution, was their gospel. The great King Áśoka believed in universal toleration and proclaimed it. He respected the Brahmins and the Buddhists alike and proclaimed that the Brahmins and the Buddhists were equal in his eyes. This mighty monarch next took recourse to the propagation of his creed. Nāgārjuna, a great Buddhist sage, was a great pioneer in the advancement of science and medicine in India about the IVth century A. D. Under the inspiration of this great man, surgery and medicine developed greatly in Buddhist India. Unfortunately, after the overthrow of Buddhism, Neo-Brahmanism would have nothing to do with experimental science. The caste system was established with greater vigour than before. Sir P. C. Ray in his *History of Hindu Chemistry* has stated the position in the following significant lines:—

“ The drift of Manu and of the later Purāṇas is in the direction of glorifying the priestly class, which set up most arrogant and outrageous pretensions. According to. Śuśruta, the dissection of dead bodies is a *sine qua non* to the student of surgery, and this high authority lays particular stress on knowledge gained from experiment and observation. But Manu would have none of it. The very touch of a corpse, according to Manu, is enough to bring

contamination to the sacred person of a Brahmin. Thus we find that shortly after the time of Vāgbhaṭa, the handling of a lancet was discouraged and anatomy and surgery fell into disuse and became to all intents and purposes lost sciences to the Hindus. It was considered equally undignified to sweat away at the forge like a Cyclops. Hence the cultivation of the *kalās* by the more refined classes of the society of which we get such vivid pictures in the ancient Sanskrit literature survives only in traditions since a very long time past.

“ The arts being thus relegated to the low castes and the professions made hereditary, a certain degree of fineness, delicacy and deftness in manipulation was no doubt secured, but this was done at a terrible cost. The intellectual portions of the community being thus withdrawn from active participation in the arts, the how and why of phenomena—the co-ordination of cause and effect—were lost sight of,—the spirit of enquiry gradually died out among a nation naturally prone to speculation and metaphysical subtleties, and India for once bade adieu to experimental and inductive sciences. Her soil was rendered morally unfit for the birth of a Boyle, a Descartes or a Newton, and her very name was all but expunged from the map of the scientific world.

“ In this land of intellectual torpor and stagnation the artisan classes, left very much to themselves and guided solely by their mother wit and sound common sense, which is their only heritage in this world, have kept up the old traditions. In their own way they display marvellous skill in damascening, making ornamental designs on metals, carving on ivory, enamelling, weaving, dyeing, lac-making, goldsmith's and jeweller's works etc.”

We are fortunate that we do not live in the days of Galileo or Bruno or Manu. We live in more enlightened times, when faith is being mellowed with reason, mysteries are giving place to facts, and religion is abandoning its imperious and domineering position against experimental science. The Church is realizing that it is desirable to restrict its activities to its proper domain and not to tyrannize over the seekers after truth and knowledge. What was recorded in Babylon by Esdras twenty-three centuries ago holds good in modern times:—

"As for truth it endureth and is always strong, it liveth and conquereth for evermore."

It will be evident from the following considerations that scientific pursuits are not antagonistic to ethical or religious matters, but science and ethics are indissolubly connected with each other, as has been aptly put by Bacon in the noble words—

"Knowledge is not a couch for the curious spirit, nor a terrace for the wondering, nor a tower of estate for the proud mind, nor a shop for profit and sale, but a store-house for the glory of God and endowment of mankind."

Sir E. Ray Lankester stated thus about the ethical value of a scientific training:

"We believe in the great importance of science and the scientific method not merely for the advancement of the material well-being of the community, but as essential to the true development of the human mind and spirit. It is only by early training in the natural sciences that a true outlook on the facts of existence can be secured. It is only by them that the supreme value of accuracy of thought and word and the supreme duty of intellectual veracity can be learned. In no other way can that complete independence of judgment in moral, as well as in intellectual, subjects be established and justified, in those who faithfully adhere to them."

Faraday wrote:

"I do think that the study of natural science is so glorious a school for the mind . . . that there cannot be a better school for education."

These passages admirably express the views of those who urge the ethical and educational value of natural science.

Faraday stated again:

"To me it appears an extraordinary thing that our present educational system is based on a study of the works of man rather than on those of the Creator.

"It is strange that so much attention should be concentrated on the failings and foibles of the human side and nature, so little about the majestic and inexorable laws of the physical side.

"The philosopher should be a man willing to listen to every suggestion, but determined to judge for himself. He should not be biassed by appearances ; have no favourite hypothesis ; be of no school ; and in doctrine have no master. He should not be a respecter of persons, but of things. Truth should be his primary object. If to these qualities be added industry, he may indeed hope to walk within the veil of the temple of nature."

Many leaders of science were also full of humility and highly religious men, e.g. Pasteur, Newton, Oersted and others.

"Blessed is he," said Pasteur, "who carries with him a God, an ideal, and obeys it: ideal of art, ideal of science, ideal of the gospel virtues ; therein lie the springs of great thoughts and great actions ; they all reflect light from the Infinite.

"What is beyond? The human mind, actuated by an invincible force, will never cease to ask itself: What is beyond? It is of no use to answer: Beyond is limitless space, limitless time or limitless grandeur. No one understands those words. He who proclaims the existence of the Infinite—and none can avoid it—accumulates in that affirmation more of the supernatural than is to be found in all the miracles of all the religions ; for the notion of the Infinite presents that double character that it forces itself upon us and yet is incomprehensible. When this notion seizes upon our understanding, we can but kneel I see everywhere the inevitable expression of the Infinite in the world ; through it, the supernatural is at the bottom of every heart. The idea of God is a form of the idea of the Infinite. As long as the mystery of the Infinite weighs on human thought, temples will be erected for the worship of the Infinite, whether God is called Brahman, Allah, Jehovah, or Jesus ; and on the pavement of those temples, men will be seen kneeling, prostrated, annihilated in the thought of the Infinite.

"You bring me the deepest joy that can be felt by a man whose invincible belief is that Science and Peace will triumph over Ignorance and War, that nations will unite, not to destroy, but to build, and that the future will belong to those who will have done most for suffering humanity.

"Young men, have confidence in those powerful and safe

methods, of which we do not yet know all the secrets. And, whatever your career may be, do not let yourselves become tainted by a deprecating and barren scepticism, do not let yourselves be discouraged by the sadness of certain hours which pass over nations. Live in the serene peace of laboratories and libraries. Say to yourselves first, 'What have I done for my instruction?', and, as you gradually advance, 'What have I done for my country?' until the time comes when you have the immense happiness of thinking that you have contributed in some way to the progress and to the good of humanity. But, whether our efforts are or are not favoured by life, let us be able to say, when we come near the great goal, 'I have done what I could.' "

Almost the same sentiment was expressed by H. C Oersted in these words:

" Nothing but the conviction that our love of knowledge is an endeavour after a true reality, and that it is true life and true harmony, can give you a genuine enthusiastic love of wisdom. The conviction that when you diffuse knowledge you are instrumental in the consolidation of God's kingdom on earth can alone give you a true and unalloyed desire to lead those around you towards a higher light and higher knowledge. This is the important vocation for which you have begun to educate yourselves. Continue your endeavours with holy seriousness, and you will become capable of participating in a joy which the world cannot bestow, and your works will be a blessing to your fatherland ; yes, and will confer a benefit on the whole human race."

So little done, so much to do, is the first and last thought of the man of science. A short time before his death, Sir Isaac Newton expressed the memorable sentiment:

" I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

Huxley was a warrior of science throughout his life. When he was thirty-one years of age, while awaiting the birth of his

first child, on December 31, 1856, he entered in his journal his ambitions for the future:

"To smite all humbugs, however big ; to give a nobler tone to science ; to set an example to abstinence from petty personal controversies, and of toleration for everything but lying ; to be indifferent as to whether the work is recognized as mine or not, so long as it is done—are these my aims?" 1860 will show :

"Wilt shape a noble life? Then cast
No backward glances to the past.
And what if something still be lost?
Act as new born in all thou dost.
What each day wills, that shalt thou ask ;
Each day will tell its proper task ;
What others do, that shalt thou prize,
In thine own work thy guerdon lies.
This above all: hate none. The rest—
Leave it to God. He knoweth best."

Professor E. F. Smith wrote as follows:—

"The wisest man could ask no more of fate
Than to be simple, modest, manly, true,
Safe from the many, honoured by the few ;
Nothing to count in world, or church, or state,
But inwardly in secret to be great ;
To feel mysterious Nature ever new.
To touch, if not to grasp, her endless clue,
And learn by each discovery how to wait,
To widen knowledge and escape the praise ;
Wisely to teach because more wise to learn ;
To toil for science, not to draw men's gaze,
But for her love of self-denial stern ;
That such a man could spring from our decays
Fans the soul's nobler faith until it burn."

SIR J. J. THOMSON, one of the greatest physicists of the world stated:

"As we conquer peak after peak we see in front of us regions full of interest and beauty, but we do not see our goal,

we do not see the horizon ; in the distance towards still higher peaks, which will yield to those who assured them still wider prospects, and deepen the feeling, the truth of which is emphasized by every advance in science, that ' Great are the Works of the Lord.' "

In Jean Paul Richter's beautiful dream, a man was called up into the vestibule of heaven and carried to universe upon universe in endless space, until his mind reeled before the transcendental distances which were still before him.

Then the man sighed and stopped, shuddered and wept. His overladen heart uttered itself in tears, and he said, " Angel, I will go no further ; for the spirit of man acheth with this infinity. Insufferable is the Glory of God. Let me lie down in the grave and hide me from the persecution of the Infinite, for end I see there is none." Then the Angel lifted up his glorious hands to the heaven of heavens, saying, " End is there none to the universe of God. Lo! also, is there no beginning."

Did not Wordsworth say?—

" And Nature, the old nurse, took
The child upon her knee,
Saying ' Here is a story book
Thy Father has written for thee.

" ' Come wander with me,' she said,
' Into regions yet untrod ;
And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God.'

" And he wandered away and away
With Nature, the dear old nurse,
Who sang to him night and day
The rhymes of the universe."

The teaching of history in a new spirit will be one of the means, perhaps the most widely applicable, of deepening the intellectual basis of unity. The teaching of history must give a large impetus to the history of science as the fields on which nations have most easily worked together, used one another's result and helped one another, except in cases such as dye stuffs

or munitions of war, where warlike or commercial rivalry has disturbed the national harmony of truth. In this study the citizen (who will in an international system be more than the citizen) of one state, may find the means of strengthening those social feelings of the more intellectual kind which are weaker and limited in the merely national sphere. The sense of human dignity cannot be better served than by observing the growth through the ages of that quality in mankind as a whole which Aristotle taught us to regard as the differentiation of man as species.

Shall we soon forget the glowing pages of Buckle wherein this truth finds such impassioned expression?

“ The actions of bad men produce only temporary evil ; the actions of good men only temporary good ; and eventually the good and the evil altogether subside, are neutralized by subsequent generations, absorbed by the incessant movement of future ages. But the discoveries of great men never leave us ; they are immortal, they contain those eternal truths which survive the shock of empires, outlive the struggles of rival creeds, and witness the decay of successive religions. All these have their different measures and their different standards ; one set of opinions for one age, another set for another. The discoveries of genius alone remain ; it is to them that we owe all that we now have ; they are for all ages and all times ; they are essentially cumulative and giving birth to the additions which they subsequently receive, they thus influence the most distant posterity, and after a lapse of centuries produce more effect than at the moment of their promulgation.”

The year 1931 saw the centenaries of the discoveries of two great English scientists, Michael Faraday and James Clerk Maxwell. In the centenary celebrations there was a service in the Westminster Abbey on the 30th September, 1931, and the Dean began his sermon with the following words:—

“ Men and brethren,

We are met together in the house of God, surrounded by the memorials of many great men who through the centuries have served their generation with all their powers. Here are the monuments of kings, of statesmen, of warriors, of judges, of explorers,

of philanthropists, and of men whose names are honoured for all time in literature, art and science. It is fitting that in such a place and in such surroundings the names of Michael Faraday and James Clerk Maxwell should find a permanent place. Before the memorial inscriptions are unveiled and particular mention is made of the services rendered to humanity by these two distinguished men, let us thank God for His manifold gifts and for His use of man's intellect for the good of humanity, the development of knowledge, and the enrichment of the life of men."

It appears, therefore, that there is no intrinsic reason for antagonism between science and religion. As a matter of fact, many scientists deeply appreciate the spirit of humility and wonderful religious toleration of the great sage, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and try to follow the precepts of this saintly person. For the welfare of a nation it is not necessary to give up religion altogether as is advocated by many in Russia, because human beings in general cannot go on depending only on material prosperity for long without religion and ethics. It is high time that religious and scientific organizations should co-operate to evolve a simple and practical code of religion which is based on ethics, toleration and universal brotherhood and which can make a fervent appeal to normal human beings.

THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF RELIGION IN THE CRISES OF HUMAN HISTORY

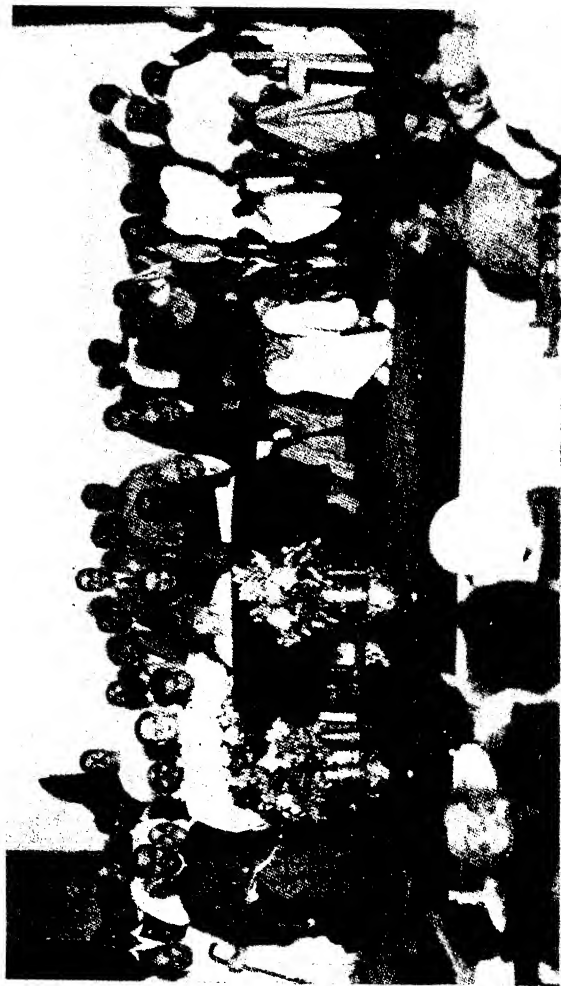
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It seems to me a rather difficult task to speak on religion. Religion is such a holy boon that I do not wish to hurt the feelings of anyone with whom I should by chance not agree. But this is the difficulty that though there can be only one truth, humanity has not yet arrived at any unanimous opinion as to this truth. Nor venture I to enter the field of theological controversy as, being a historian, mostly concerned with worldly matters, I do not feel myself competent enough. If in the teeth of all these shortcomings



The Gathering at the Calcutta University Institute, March 3



View of the Dais during the afternoon session of the Parliament held at the Calcutta
University Institute on Wednesday, March 3

I dare to address you, it is in the conviction that the study of human history can teach us something, not so much of the Divine Revelation, as of human weakness and self-deception. For religion is not only a Divine, it is also a very human, matter. No doubt, there were times when God revealed Himself in all his Glory. But the crowd of the faithful are men, the great majority of the doctors of divinity are human beings, the holy Scriptures are written in a human language, the religious congregations are social entities. We need not doubt of their lofty thoughts, of their earnest and devout feelings, and nevertheless we must concede that at all times they have been liable to the adulteration mostly unconscious, of the Divine by secular thoughts, intentions, customs and traditions. The consciousness of this admixture of elements pertaining to the compass of human social life will bring us to a better appreciation of the real Divine light in every religion, and thus will teach us tolerance and humility.

During these few minutes at my disposal I cannot, of course, unravel before you the whole history of human religious life. I shall confine myself to the discussion of a special phenomenon which has struck my attention when studying the great convulsions of social life. This phenomenon is the contrast between their religious or philosophical catch-words and movements on the one side and of the moral dreadfulness of the actions intended to promulgate these religious revivals. Almost all the great revolutions have proclaimed the religious or semi-religious and the moral reformation of humanity. At the present day Russian bolshevism and German national-socialism have emerged as a sort of new atheistic religions, or better as "*Weltanschauungen*" i.e. outlooks on life, based on faith and conviction. and struggling to annihilate the older churches. The social crisis in Spain has become a deadly conflict between the Roman church and communism. In Mexico you have an almost similar situation. The French revolution was a struggle against the Christian churches in the name of humanity. The great social revolution caused by the influx of the American gold into the economy of Renaissance Europe was fought under the banners of the Reformation and of the Counter Reformation. The victory of Christianity over the heathen religions of the Roman Empire was the result of the social

revolution which we generally call the Age of the Military Emperors. How many revolutions in the history of Asia or Africa were at the same time religious movements! May I mention a few—the rebellion of the Mahdi in the Sudan, the Taiping Rebellion in China, the foundation of the Safavi Empire in Persia, of that of the Fatimids in Egypt, of most of the Moroccan sultanates, even of Islam itself. And all these revolutions were full of fiendish cruelty and heroic martyrdom in the name of religion and morality. Roman emperors have tortured the early Christians, Mohammedan conquerors have butchered the “heathens” of India and Africa, Spanish soldiers have slaughtered the Indian peoples of America, every sort of Christian heretics has been burnt on the piles of the Inquisition, the French Jacobins have executed many thousands of guiltless persons for their humanitarian ideals, and how many persons have during the last decades perished by the Tscheka or in the concentration camps! But all these acts done in the name of religion have been condemned as the greatest sins by all the saints and moralists, and slaughter and torture have been considered as the worst crimes by all the judges of this world. Even more, these very acts were directed even against the greatest acknowledged saints of their time as the Christ, Saint Theresa and others. This contradiction has puzzled many people already centuries ago. In the West first the Apocalypse of St. John tried to explain it by the figure of the Antichrist, the power of Evil in the mask of God's own son. And even during the recent years a number of thinkers have repeated this old answer. But I doubt whether we are justified in questioning the sincerity of most of the leaders of these movements. Some of them have been shocked by such criminal interpretations of their teachings, as those of Luther and Erasmus or the French Girondists; others have ignored it like the Mahdi; others have deemed it a terrible, but unavoidable business, like Calvin, Lenin and the popes of the Counter-Reformation; and just a few have really hailed it as an integral part of their message. Thus you will understand that in most cases these horrible acts of intolerance have not been an essential part of the original revolutionary message. No doubt, in many cases this message preached war and struggle, but it was intended to be a fair fight against a foul enemy. With increasing

obstinacy and bitterness this struggle has always degenerated into a fiendish ferociousness incompatible with the very message of the same movement.

How can we explain this phenomenon? Why were the fundamental religious teachings forgotten in a struggle for religious ideals? There is the curious fact that the higher social classes have many times been corrupt or immoral or indifferent, but that they have never fought for any "*Weltanschauung*," they have often made use of such struggles for their own purposes, but they have always been tolerant themselves. On the other hand cruel intolerance is almost always evident in all the movements propagated amongst the lower and middle social classes. Thus it is obvious that the reason of the above-mentioned cruelties must not be sought in the special message of any one of those revolutions, but in the psychological reaction of the social classes concerned to this message. More developed or deeply religious people are too sceptic or too humble as not to be conscious of the insufficiency of human knowledge; they will, therefore, not too much insist on unessential differences. This consciousness is, however, absent among most of the uneducated or insufficiently educated persons. Their outlook on life is as simple as possible; there are some truths, perhaps incoherent, but never questioned. When there is some coherent explanation of life and of the world, it is very much simplified, as it has no other purpose than to be the background of some moral rules. In most cases it comprises a good God rewarding the people living according to His prescriptions and some evil being holding power over those doing wrong. Now, the characteristic feature of this morality is, that it is not essentially ethical, but an enumeration of rites and customs which you have to observe or to avoid. This type of religion is to be found with most primitive peoples, and its simplicity and ritualism is not in the least in the way of a fervent religious sentiment.

Now, this primitive form of religiosity is still the rule among the lower classes of those nations the upper classes of which are the representatives of our high civilizations. They have accepted the outer forms and names of the great world religions, but their ways of thought and feeling have not changed. Go to any popular place of pilgrimage anywhere in the world; it may have

been dedicated to any deity of the loftiest creed; but the popular cultus still preserves the conceptions and ideas of primitive man.

Thus, when some religious or political agitation arouses the mind of the masses, you see the interesting fact that the elevated ideology of the movement undergoes the same transformation which we observe in the popular forms of the great religions. But, as we have seen, the most essential feature of this popular "*Weltanschauung*" is the code of symbolic rites and prescriptions regulating the life of the faithful. It is the strong frame supporting the daily life of the man from the street, the law which solves all the problems of his life. Because he has only very rudimentary ideas of his own about the problems of life, he wants this frame of regulations; without it he becomes disorientated and helpless. And as the strength of those regulations in a considerable degree depends on their general acceptance, every person deviating from those norms is a danger for their validity, and thus also for the spiritual salvation of those who believe in them.

A struggle between religious or philosophical ideals when brought to the masses will, therefore, become a struggle between codes of rites and institutions regulating the life of those masses—codes which must be universally accepted or rejected. The majority are always inclined to create the mental atmosphere of general acceptance of their ideals with all the means in their power, i.e. by force. Thus the way from elevated idealism down to intolerance is opened.

There is, however, another reason. In all these revolutions the spiritual struggle is blended with a social crisis. Why is it possible to arouse the masses to such an enthusiasm for ideas they do not really understand? There are, no doubt, ideologies proclaiming the desire of the peoples, of the masses, for the discretionary political power. But these are ideologies, not facts. Neither the masses nor even the greater part of the leading classes ever aim at a position the responsibilities of which they are afraid of. That which they really demand is the just and righteous social and economic order, and the real meaning of all democratic institutions is the certainty that this order will not be changed by the persons in possession of the executive. This just

order is, however, a thing which is changed by every new discovery, route of communications, new form of production, etc. In the periods of far-reaching cultural changes the contrast between the real forms of public life and of the popular ideas of the just economic and social order becomes specially evident. It, therefore, threatens not only the customary forms of life, but also those codes of prescriptions which are the religious and moral backbone of the masses. This is the reason why every revolutionary—or among the upper classes, any anti-revolutionary—propaganda will get a more or less “religious” character, or why any religious or philosophical message will become the catchword for a social movement. In the popular mind both become that code of prescriptions regulating the daily and the public life as well as moral laws and religious rites. And for every party the opponent is not only the disturber of the just moral order, but for this very reason also the destroyer of the just social and economic order. Therefore all the hatred and all the bitterness of the distressed are poured out on him. And all the tortures and cruelties are allowed in order either to convert him into a good member of the reconstructed society and of true faith, or to annihilate him.

You see, the contradiction between the religious catchwords of such revolutionary movements and religious ethics does not appear, as soon as we understand them from the point of view of primitive religiosity. These revolutionary movements are a relapse into the primitive feelings latent among the lower social classes, a misinterpretation of more elevated teachings by their mentality. This misunderstanding has, no doubt, prepared the way for many of the highest messages which humanity has ever received, it was perhaps an essential stage in the way of their propagation, but it has nothing to do with their Divine Revelation. There is almost no religion or faith which at some time or other has not come under the good propagandistic influence as well as the distressing effect of such a misinterpretation. Let us not forget that all these forms of intolerance are a social and not a religious phenomenon. And let us, therefore, withdraw the reproach of intolerance from the discussions on the value and truth of the different philosophies and religions.

RELIGION AND MORALITY

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When most of the scientific thinkers of the west and some of the Indian thinkers of the present day say that religion ought to be thrust away from the world, surely they do not mean by religion what the Indian seers of the ancient times understood by *Dharma*. Indeed religion, if understood in the sense of "certain hard and fast rules of conduct and ceremonial observances," has very little place in the progressive civilization of the world, even if it does not deserve the fate of being thrust away altogether; for such religion very often gives rise to fanaticism, and the less it appears in the world, the better for its upkeep and real progress. But religion implies something more. As distinguished from fetish-worship and the like, religion in the true sense of the term implies a faith in, and devotion to, the Absolute Being. Religion, in other words, implies a relation between a worshipping object,—an individual soul—and a worshipped object—the Absolute Lord. It implies further an element of distinction as well as one of unity between the subject and the object. Religion thus supposes two main factors which are different and yet related—so far distinct and so far akin. It involves something more. The Absolute Being does not act on man by the direct manifestation of His Absolute Essence, nor does man know Him by immediate vision. Take away the written word,—the scriptures—take away again the Special Revelation, and an impassable chasm will separate man from the Absolute Being, and all religion will at once be destroyed.

Briefly speaking, then, religion implies the conception and concrete realization, in the manner laid down in the scriptures, by the individual soul, of the Supreme Identity that pervades, and acts as the Immanent Regulator of, the universe of being. Such conception of the One and the many, again, is what is understood by the Indian word "*Dharma*." The primary function of *Dharma* or religion consists more in seeking release and redemption

from the world-process than in accounting for its origin. But secondarily, *Dharma* cannot but imply certain sacraments or duties incumbent upon men in their mutual relation with reference to the affairs of the world. Such duties, again, mainly consist of what are called moral duties and moral obligations; and these duties, implied as they are by the term '*Dharma*,' must be subservient to the attainment of self-realization. Evidently, therefore, there is a close relation between religion and morality, and the object of this paper is to show what that relation is.

The fact that there is a relation between religion and morality has been discussed by all philosophers, European and Indian. Looking to the west we find that a class of thinkers, e.g. Descartes, Locke, Paley and others hold that religion is the source of morality—it is religion that leads to morality. Others, again, e.g. Kant and Martineau suppose that morality is the source of religion. Matthew Arnold goes further and says that religion is nothing but morality touched with emotion. Thus according to all the western thinkers there is a very close relation between religion and morality. This is also the view of Indian thinkers, specially of those that are theistic. If now we want to know the definite character of this close relation between religion and morality, we should first note carefully the derivative meaning of the word 'morality.' The word comes from the root '*mores*' which means conduct. Conduct, again, is best defined as those acts which are not merely adjusted to ends but also definitely willed. The highest end to which these willed acts are adjusted has been differently described by different moralists of the west. Their theories about the Moral Ideal may be broadly classified into Hedonism, Rationalism and Eudaemonism. It is needless to repeat here the criticisms which the first two classes of theories are subject to—the defects that outweigh their merits. In their development various moral conflicts arise which cannot be explained away. But it is to be remembered that the task of the moral life is the reconciliation of these apparently conflicting claims—the full recognition both of the rights of reason and of the rights of sensibility, and their reduction, if possible, to the unity of a common life governed by a single central principle. Such reconciliation and reduction was effected by the Eudaemonistic moralists

and clearly and impressively set forth in the self-realization theory of Professor Green.

This theory of self-realization, where the term 'self' means the total or divine self, is to be regarded as the soundest, because it is all-absorbing, of all moral theories, and is now the accepted theory of most of the present-day moralists of the west. That this theory is accepted in almost all our Indian scriptures goes without saying. But self-realization cannot be really attained so long as our acts are confined to the phenomenal world with a complete forgetfulness of the Supreme All-pervading Identity. The sphere of our moral conduct is one of struggle and is full of distractions, and consequently impedes that concentration of thought which is indispensably necessary for self-realization. In this sphere of struggle we are always conscious of an incompleteness due to the impermanence of the objects and acts that always try to hold their sway upon the mind, and so the moral life divorced from a consciousness of the All-pervading, All-regulating Supreme Being yields only a partial solution of the contradiction between the individual and the universal nature of man. The highest result of such divorced morality, instead of being an attainment of the Infinite as a positive object of desire, is only the endless negation of the finite. Such being the case, it is quite evident that morality abstracted from religion gives us nothing but impermanence and inadequacy ; and if morality is to be crowned with the final end called self-realization, it must have a religious and hence metaphysical basis. Such close relation between religion and morality has been upheld by all theistic philosophers of the west. This again is the keynote of all the Hindu systems of thought ; it runs not only through the strictly philosophical and religious systems, but also through the codes of sacraments and the ethical and didactic treatises—even through the systems of medicine and all forms of profane literature. The codes of Manu, Yājñavalkya and others, for example, while dealing with the duties of mankind in the various stages of life in this world, lay the greatest stress upon the highest duty or *dharma* which consists in *Ātma-jñāna* or Self-realization, and distinctly lay down that those sacraments including all moral precepts are to be regarded as but stepping stones to the Highest *Dharma*.

Looking deeper into the question we find that religion is not simply the basis of, but serves as the surest guarantee for, all true morality. This appears from the true implication of the *Gītā* text—

*Sarvadharmān parityajya māmekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
Ahaṁ tvāṁ sarvāpāpebhyo mokṣayishyāmi mā śucaḥ,*

where God calls upon all beings to resort to Him alone even at the sacrifice of all other *dharma*s, and He promises to save them from all sorts of transgression. The various duties referred to here may be broadly classified into three classes from the point of view of the three life-conceptions, viz. the individual, the social and the divine or universal. Of these the last-mentioned one is the best meaning of life, and the duty considered from this point of view is the highest duty of mankind, the reason being that "love of God" which characterizes the true nature of a being is the impelling motive of the universal life-conception. The highest duty, again, means that which transcends and yet reconciles within itself all other duties. Hence it follows that if one has recourse to the highest duty as the aim of one's life, that is to say, takes to "devotion to God" as the supreme function of one's own self, the systematic practice of all acts of true morality will be necessarily implied thereby, but not *vice versa*.

This fact of religion being the foundation of morality is to be accepted all the more, because none of the moral virtues can by itself be regarded as an absolute standard of the rightness and wrongness of action. To take an example, veracity or the duty of truth-speaking is regarded by all moralists—European as well as Indian—as one of the few cardinal virtues. European moralists seem to be puzzled with the question whether veracity is an absolute and independent duty or a special application of some higher principle. Kant regards it as a categorical imperative binding upon all under all circumstances and irrespectively of the consequences thereof. But it is a disputed point whether truth-speaking as a duty is to be regarded as a categorical imperative or there are any exceptions and qualifications put upon it. On this point a class of European moralists, while advocating the latter alternative, say that 'though an attempt should always be made

to regard the duty of veracity as a moral maxim, still, so far as the affairs of the actual world are concerned, the rule of veracity cannot be elevated into a definite moral axiom and hence there are circumstances under which even a lie is allowable.' One such exceptional case as laid down in Sidgwick's *Methods of Ethics* as well as in the *Mahābhārata* and *Purāṇa* Texts¹ is that it may sometimes be right for persons to speak falsely to an invalid, if this seems the only way of concealing facts that might produce a dangerous shock. Briefly speaking, a lie in the shape of *suppressio veri* or *suggestio falsi* might be allowable, when the object is a noble one. We are thus led to conclude that the duty of veracity by itself cannot be regarded as an absolute standard of morality.

Consider again the case of the moral virtue called *ahimsā*. Literally it means 'non-killing,' but it is also defined as the quality of not wishing anyone to suffer through one's body, words or thoughts. Whatever the meaning might be, there is no doubt that this quality occupies a very high rank in the list of moral attributes as we find in the *Mahābhārata* and the Law-Codes of Manu, Yājñavalkya, etc.² as well as in the Buddhist Texts and Christian Theology. Yet this very noble attribute of *ahimsā* cannot be regarded as an absolute and independent standard of morality for the simple reason that there are restrictions put upon it. Not to speak of the act of killing other beings, even the most heinous crime of homicide, is justified under certain circumstances. Suppose a ruffian is about to outrage the modesty of your wife, mother, sister or any other woman; under such circumstances when all conciliatory measures fail and there is none at hand to save the situation, even the act of killing that man is justified by the ancient Law-givers of India as well as by the English Penal Codes.³

¹ Cf. *Strishu narmavivāhe cha vṛittyarthe prāṇasamkate, Gobrahmanarthe himsāyam nāṇṛitam syājjugupsitam* (Bhāg. VIII.xx.43).

² Cf. *Ahimsā paramo dharmmah* (M. S. Ādi XI.13); *Ahimsā satyam-āsteyam sauchamindriyanigrahaḥ* (Manu X.63).

³ Cf. *Gurum vā bālaviddho vā brāhmanam vā bahusrutam, Atatāyina-māyāntam hanyādevāvichārayan*.

Besides, the whole physical atmosphere is so completely charged with germs of animals that living itself is impossible without killing them. On this point compare the *Bhāgavata* text, " *jīvo jīvasya jīvanam* "—" One created being is the sustenance of another," as well as the text " *Prāṇasyānnamidam sarvam* "—" All this is the food for life"—which we come across in the *Mahābhārata*, the *Vedānta-sūtras* and some of the Upanishads.

It is needless to discuss the point further. The fate of these two cardinal virtues is shared by all the other moral virtues.

We are now in a position to state definitely that wherever there is a true religious spirit, i.e. sincere devotion to God, there cannot but exist all moral qualities and moral excellences. This is distinctly stated in the *Bhāgavata* text—

*Yasyāsti bhaktirbhagavatya kiñchanā
sarvaiguṇairistatra samāsate surāḥ*

*Harāvabhaktasya kuto mahadguṇā
manorathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ*

— V. xviii. 12

which means, " All good qualities exist in a harmonious way in him who is fervently devoted to Bhagavān (God), and none is to be found in one who is not devoted, for the latter's mind is ever directed to transient worldly objects."

An exhaustive enumeration of these qualities is useless for our present purpose. All that we can say is that according to the view of all prominent moralists the attribute of kindness occupies a very important place in the long list of moral qualities. The external duty of such kindness, viz. the promotion of happiness is, according to Indian scriptures, to be directed towards all sentient beings; and on this point the Indian theory, though it differs from that of the intuitional moralists who hold that kindly dispositions are to be cultivated towards men only, agrees with that of the commonsense moralists who hold that the pain of animals is *per se* to be avoided. Since kindness, again, is best defined as a conscious feeling within one's mind of the sufferings of others, the most natural implication of the quality of kindness is 'service to the whole creation.' This idea of universal good and service is now generally accepted as the highest conception

of morality, and it far surpasses, in respect of fulness and richness of content, that of 'service to humanity' which characterizes the conception of religion in the Positive Philosophy of Comte. Based upon the social life-conception Comte's theory is open to many serious objections coming especially from the pen of Count Tolstoi in his noble attempt at an exposition of the true theory of Christian Morality. "The man who loves humanity, what is it that he loves? There is a state, there is a people, there is the abstract conception of man. But humanity as a concrete conception is impossible. Humanity? Where is its limit? Where does it end and where does it begin? Does it exclude the savage, the idiot, the inebriate, the insane? If one were to draw a line of demarcation so as to exclude the lower representatives of the human race, where ought it to be drawn? Ought it to exclude the Negroes as they do in the United States, or the Hindoos as some Englishmen do, or the Jews as does another nation? But if we include all humanity without exception, why should we restrict ourselves to men? Why should we exclude the higher animals some of whom are superior to the lowest representatives of the human race? We do not know humanity in the concrete nor can we fix its limits. Humanity is a fiction and therefore it cannot be loved."

Indeed the serious blunder of the Positive Philosopher whereby he falls into such inextricable fallacies lies in his ill-chosen social life-conception and in the sad ignorance of the fact that the highest conception of morality must have a solid and clearly-defined foundation in the human soul, whereas love of humanity is but a theoretical conclusion reached through analogy. The real point to be specially noted here is that the essence of the individual soul being love, its well-being may be traced not to the fact that it loves this object or that one, but to the fact that it loves the Principle of all things—God whom it strives to realize through love, and will through the love of God love all men and all things. In other words, the foundation of true morality must be well chosen—the divine life-conception which is the best of all life-conceptions must be regarded as the basis of all true morality in the highest sense of the term. And if that is done, there would be no objection about the term 'humanity,' the more

because, according to the theory of creation as laid down in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and Manu-Texts, the concept of humanity is not restricted to mankind alone but to the whole body of created beings.

It is now clearly established that 'love of God and love of the whole creation' are the two cardinal doctrines of the two allied things—religion and morality, and that they are inseparably connected. There is no doubt that these two qualities are indispensably necessary for the establishment of world-peace and harmony. But their real significance was long lost to mankind and the result was disharmony and unrest prevailing everywhere. To save mankind from this very miserable plight and to teach them the true gospel of love there appeared a century ago Sri Ramakrishna as the Incarnation and World-Teacher of the present age. Let us, therefore, in conclusion adore with deep respect and reverence this Great Master in whose sacred memory this Parliament of Religions has met today.

THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS OF ECONOMICS

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I

Sitting on the bank of the Ganges, Sri Ramakrishna took some earth in one hand and a few coins in the other, and, saying that money is of no more real value than dirt, he consigned both to the Ganges. This little incident which formed part of Sri Ramakrishna's *sādhana* is full of significance to the world today.

The cardinal feature of modern times is that the old faiths are being replaced by "isms" based on economics. I am not one of those who regret this. On the other hand I hold that we have advanced a step towards self-knowledge. In the earlier ages the masses did not recognize that their conduct was actuated by economic considerations. The people of England accepted

the Anglican Church not because Henry VIII fell in love with a woman beneath his rank, but because the Pope, when dividing the New World, left England out. Then as now the problem was one of haves and have-nots. Our fault is not that we have rejected religion and accepted economics but that our economics remains a primitive religion. The new creeds, no less than the old, have their inspired prophets and blind devotees, crusades no less ardent and Bartholomew massacres no less bloody. We say we have discarded idols, but the human sacrifice continues.

II

We read in text-books of economics that the Mercantile system is dead; but our trade-pacts and our juggleries with currencies, exchange and tariffs are traceable to the old delusion that the inflow of gold makes a country prosperous. In a world where all labour under the delusion it is dangerous to be sane. A country that allows herself to be denuded of gold runs a grave risk because in the event of war she will not be able to buy arms. It is by establishing a monopoly of resources like capital or land that nations cut one another's throats not only in war but also in peace. For example, an underpopulated country can produce cheaper butter than a country where land bears the pressure of population. Similarly a merchant with ten million pounds can eliminate a rival who has only a million. Thus the rich tend to grow richer. Two factors facilitate this process: producers are allowed to compete or combine, and production is becoming more and more highly mechanized. The accumulation of money in the hands of a few brings in its train the shrinkage of markets, the fall of dividends, the restriction of production, unemployment, and starvation in the midst of plenty. When the situation grows desperate, equally desperate remedies are applied; but no lasting cure is effected because the remedies themselves are rooted in the delusion about money which was the cause of the disease. Humanity is like a person suffering from a recurring fever, each crisis being worse than the previous one. If the root cause is not removed, if men do not begin to understand themselves and their real needs, the next crisis may wipe out civilization.

III

It is not the thought of genuine economic needs that makes a man glad when the entry against his name in the bank-ledger rises from six digits to seven, and miserable when he hears that his neighbour's account has risen to eight. The great money-makers as fighting and they enjoy the fight. Money-making is a game of chance. A rumour spreads that Hitler said something to Goering, and a Bombay stock-jobber is reduced to bankruptcy ; if the rumour had been of another nature he might have been made a millionaire. Modern speculation is a gamble, a craving for excitement, an escape from self. If our millionaires are like race-horses, the rest of humanity may be compared to the spectators: the gambling craze is strong in them too. They live vicariously. If a man controls the money-market, receptions are held wherever he goes, and magazines are filled with admiring accounts of how he wears his hat. The world thus encourages the scramble for money which is the cause of unemployment. The world is like a family with an only kitchen which the cook keeps locked. And they worship the cook for it. Poor martyrs to Mammon! Society suffers because the social impulse is directed to an anti-social channel by a habit which itself is the product of social custom.

How does this happen? The answer is that economics is rooted in psychology. Without going into the merits of the different psychologies of today we shall state the problem in their terms.

The economic problem is one of unadjusted behaviour, man continues to behave as if the world in which he lives has not been completely changed by science. His emotional life remains fixed to the infantile love of dirt, gold. Fixation being due to repression and repression to anxiety, we may say that he is the victim of neurotic dread. " Take no thought for the morrow " was sane advice. Sri Ramakrishna disliked plans for the future. There can never be any sense of security for the man who wants to provide against the malice of time by laying for himself treasures upon earth. The fear which makes a man provide for the morrow makes him hoard for his children, and causes sparsely

populated countries to close their doors lest there should be over-population at some distant future. The result is war, and thus the craving for security destroys both security and life. Neurosis brings about the evil it dreads.

Neurotic fear is always due to a state of inward dissociation. The modern economic system separates the gain-seeking aspect of man from the rest of his personality. "Compagnie Anonyme" is a significant name: the shareholders of a company may be persons with noble impulses, but the joint-stock company has no human sentiments. So Mrs. Warren's profession is never in lack of funds, but the wheat cultivator has no credit. Humanity is thus being crushed by a mighty machine which is nothing but an aspect of itself. The conflict between man and his environment is therefore the projection of the struggle within himself between the self-regarding and the self-sacrificing impulses, between the Ego and the Super-Ego. War is a dramatic attempt to deal with this conflict. The attempt is renewed again and again because it is ineffective; the only correct method is to begin by understanding the nature of the inner conflict. The opposition between God and Mammon is really between two aspects of one single identification: the money that we love stands for that which satisfies human needs, and our master-need is the need to realize the self.

A man goes on heaping millions upon millions because of a stagnation in the realm of values. He is the victim of a repetition-compulsion. It is as if a man were to spend all his life in studying the alphabets of the languages. The diseased mind repeats some meaningless activity, because there is a separation of the activity from its purpose, of the affect from the end of conation. Thus eating which is meant to keep the organism in health becomes a pleasurable end. Manu says that over-eating is not only an unhygienic habit but also a crime against society and a sin against Heaven. The seven deadly sins are nothing but the misguided endeavour of the hunger of the spirit to stifle itself with an over-supply of the things meant to appease the finite hunger of the body. Our economic problems can be solved only if men render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's.

IV

There need be no conflict between religion and economics: religion itself springs to satisfy a human need. From birth to death man is an economic animal. As new instincts develop, new needs arise. The trouble with conventional economics is that it ignores the dynamic nature of life and tries to treat man as a money-seeking machine. Professor Bradley had a pithy saying about dog-logic: what exists smells, that which does not smell does not exist; the economist's logic is something similar: what is not expressed in money is not wealth. But there are higher kinds of bliss that cannot be bought or sold. Indeed Buddha, Christ and others assert that money is a positive hindrance. The kingdom of heaven is like a hidden treasure having found which a man sells away everything else. "When a man tastes of the bliss of God," says Sri Ramakrishna, "no other pleasure appeals to him."

The failure of men to rise to the higher bliss is the only cause of unemployment and misery. Activity on the infinite planes will automatically remove the craving for monopolizing material objects, and open our eyes to the absurdity of an economics which makes us burn wheat and starve, simply because bars of gold are locked up. Money should be a token to be given in return for the things that nourish the flesh, but by directing the hunger of the spirit towards it we treat it as a token of distinction. At a prize distribution the successful student is given a ribbon which he can keep and others cannot get; but the supply of food is not restricted to those who gain ribbons. In the money-hoarding competition of gigantic gamblers some have been deprived of gold, but is that sufficient reason why they should be denied food? In actual practice our theory of the optimum population—that population is looked upon as the optimum which brings to each man the largest amount of money—is a piece of barbarity. Science has invented such implements that one man can cultivate a square mile, and so, in an agricultural country, if foreign markets can be secured, two per square mile will be over-population! But cultural, intellectual and spiritual life will bring about a change of attitude to fellowmen, because the

musician wants an audience and starving men listen to no music. A man cannot grow to his full stature if his fellowmen are starving. Sri Ramakrishna felt miserable till food and clothing were distributed to the poor. Individual, communal and national jealousies are rooted in the belief that the clash of interests is inevitable in a world where population tends to grow; but when life rises to higher planes, it will be clear that there is no such clash. Nay more. All available evidence points to the conclusion that the diversion of creative energy to higher channels automatically brings about a fall of the birth-rate. In short, spiritual activity is the only permanent and effective cure of unemployment. If we seek the Kingdom of Heaven, every other treasure will be added unto it.

V

The assertion that religion will cure unemployment will seem absurd, because Marx and Freud symbolize the spirit of the age.

The gospel of Marx as commonly understood is briefly this: Destroy religion utterly, then the discontent of the oppressed classes which is being kept ineffective by this opiate will, through class-war, establish a society in which there will be no government, no inequalities, no injustice and no discontent. This popular notion is but another illustration of Marx's doctrine that the economic conditions of an age affect its thought. In our Mammon-ridden society a person who fails to achieve social recognition, or a position or a particular partner in marriage, associates all regrets with lack of money; the thwarted longings of the spirit speak, as it were, the language of economics. Reacting to such an environment, the mind conceives an ideal which appears to be purely economic. Until that ideal has transformed environment the nature of the discontent which conjured up the ideal cannot be clarified. One thing is, however, significant. The Marxian appeal is to altruism; the revolt against religion is itself a religion. There are a few who think that the love of monetary gain will evolve a "final" society in which self-interest will automatically work like justice and love, but those who believe in a dialectical process cannot concede that there will be a final

stage. The mind, according to Marx, observes outer reality in order to change it; like a spring straining to unwind itself the mind is on the look-out for an excuse to be active.¹ The attack at present is on Mammon, and money-hoarding can be eliminated by controlling economic environment. But, when Mammon goes, we shall discover that the real enemy was not he but Satan; and pride cannot be conquered except through self-discipline.² The economic environment will therefore cease to be the key to subsequent progress. That progress will not be a mere raising of the material standard of living. A man is pleased with a Ford car, if his neighbour has none: but if the neighbour gets a Buick, he must have a Rolls Royce. What is thought to be a demand of the body is often put forth by Satan. The insistence on too much refinement in the objects that satisfy material wants implies a diversion of the hunger of the spirit from its legitimate channel. A rich Marwari gentleman, noticing a soiled coverlet on Sri Ramakrishna's bed, offered to deposit money in the bank so that his needs might be supplied. Sri Ramakrishna besought him with folded hands to desist. The Marwari next approached Hriday¹ and pressed him to accept the money in the name of the Holy Mother.² When Sri Ramakrishna knew this, he again objected. Finding arguments of no avail, Sri Ramakrishna cried out in anguish, "Mother!³ Why dost Thou bring such people here, who want to estrange me from Thee?" Referring to this incident, he afterwards remarked, "I felt as if somebody were sawing through my skull." Marx, steeped in an ideology produced by his environment, felt that religion was a weak submission to torture; but it is really the awakening of the higher bliss. It is the free activity of the spirit on an infinite plane. Instead of denying the validity of such activity Marx might as well have affirmed it, because his own dialectic ultimately points that way.

¹ Sri Ramakrishna's nephew who was attending on him.—ED.

² Saradamani Devi, the nun-wife of Sri Ramakrishna. At the age of six she was betrothed to him. When she grew into womanhood, he did not live *en maritalement* with her, but accepted her as his first disciple: she embraced the ideals of chastity and poverty of which he himself was a perfect embodiment.—ED.

³ God as the Mother of the universe.—ED.

VI

The Freudian challenge is delivered in a peculiar jargon and we need some space to explain its significance.

God is a father-substitute. This is the central tower of Freudian psycho-analytical theory. Conscience or super-ego, says he, is formed when the child identifies himself with the father. As conscience is the legacy of the Oedipus complex of the individual, so religion is the legacy of the Oedipus complex of the race.

If the super-ego is modelled on the father it should resemble him, but it does not. Freudian interpretation is like Morton's fork. If the father was fair, he may appear in dreams as black because the unconscious thinks in contraries, or as very fair because the unconscious exaggerates, or as having the colour a man ought to have because the unconscious idealizes too! There are fathers who fear to punish their sons under the impression that a harsh father makes a harsh super-ego, but Freud definitely assures us this is a mistaken notion. Even if a child has never seen a father, the super-ego is formed. A study of the dreams of boys bred under the matriarchal system shows that the super-ego is modelled on the uncle who is never seen with the mother. How does this fit in with the theory that the super-ego is born out of sexual jealousy?

"Normally," says Freud, "the super-ego is constantly becoming more and more remote from the original parents." In the dreams of one of my students his father had many of the qualities of our Vice-Chancellor. Instead of saying that he projected the image of his father on the Vice-Chancellor, we can say that he projected the image of the latter ~~on~~ on his father. It is more logical to look upon the super-ego of an adult as a compromise of many identifications caused by an inner hunger, than as an identification with the father caused by outer necessity. "Anything arising from within" says Freud, "must transform itself into external perceptions and come into connection with memory residues to become conscious." The father happens to be the first image on which the impulse from within is projected. This establishes nothing more than a fortuitous association between the father and the super-ego. Priority implies no causal relation.

The priority itself is far from proved. Freud now recognizes that the fear felt during the autoerotic and narcissistic stages resembles the fear felt during the Oedipus conflict. Freud has thus knocked the bottom out of his theory of the Oedipus complex. It is no longer necessary to link fear with the parent whose image it assumed at an intermediate stage of development. To confuse the super-ego with the father is like asserting that a man is a dog, because at one stage of intra-uterine development he resembled a puppy. Freud admits, "conscience is no doubt something from within," but adds, "it has not been there from the beginning,"—as if he had analysed the seed! Psycho-analysis can only dig up the root long after the plant has sprouted, the experiences recalled during analysis being, to use Freud's own words, "Inventions and fantasies." The theory that the super-ego is not latent in the seed, that it is an intruder like a parasitic growth, needs to be seriously considered only after we know exactly how the father-identification takes place. Freud's confession is frank: "We ourselves do not feel we have fully understood it." The belief that Freud has demonstrated that God is a substitute and religion a sick flight from reality is itself a mere illusion.

Jung pointed out years ago that Freud's attack on religion was due to his inability to grasp the implications of his own discoveries. Freud has now recognized the folly of the assault. Freud once believed that the super-ego caused repression; repression, anxiety; and anxiety, neurosis. But he now says, "the anxiety was there from the first and creates the repression." The super-ego or the representative of God is not simply absolved of blame; its biological value is conceded. "The fear of the super-ego should normally never cease, since it is indispensable in social relations." The super-ego impels man to self-fulfilment through social adjustment rather than through self-aggrandizement. The life-force, while developing the faculties for which social life alone can afford scope, also develops that which makes society possible. At the beginning of his career, Freud held that sex united men, but that was because he assumed that whatever counteracted egoism was sex. Now he knows better: sex divides men, the totem unites. Freud's testimony is a further corroboration of the evidence of Christian and Hindu mystics that through the holy

communion men grow into Christ or the *Virāṭ Puruṣha*, the cosmic man. Then economics becomes identical with religion.

Psycho-analysis corroborates one more old finding. As a dream when recollected gains attributes of space and time, spiritual experience when it enters consciousness assumes relative qualities. Hence God is differently realized by different men or by the same man at different times. The assertion that identification with God is pathological is not supported. Identification with God is not a forcing of something from outside but the clarifying of something already within. At Guruvayūr temple,¹ now made famous by Satyāgrahā,² there was a devotee who called himself Govinda, the deity of the temple. As the deity was generally known as father, one could take it to be a case of pathological identification with father-substitute, but then he could call out to any cow he met on the road, "I am Govinda, give me milk," and the cow would come and suckle him. Faith reposed in any manifestation of perfection is ultimately reposed in God. Our successive identifications with father, teacher, healer, tragic hero, king and sage are in some measure identifications with God. Right through life we obey an innate command, "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." Through identification with the father the child adjusts himself to the domestic world, through identification with God the sage adjusts himself to the larger world. Freud judging the tree by its root called God a father-substitute, let us judge it by fruit and call father a God-substitute.

VII

The leisure that power production forces on mankind is called unemployment at present, but the right way is to make liberal education compulsory and to raise the age-limit. Then we relieve unemployment, restore dignity to man, and prevent the impressment of immature minds. A school must be a place where students learn to tolerate one another and live in a world of values rather than of prices; premature interest in vocational training and in wages arrests the growth of personality and makes the

¹ In South India.

² The name given by Mahatma Gandhi to his method of passive resistance.

individual a menace to society. The disruption of post-war Europe is mainly because she enlisted boys as soldiers. Too early initiation into the business of life, whether it be the insidious warfare of peace or the honest one of the battlefield, blunts moral and aesthetic sensibilities and makes life a craving for excitement. Psycho-analytical literature is full of the case reports of businessmen who become a prey to nervous breakdown immediately after retirement. Why should the world be so organized that the unemployed for lack of food, the employed for lack of leisure, and both for lack of a cultural background, find life dull and empty?

When growth is hindered, humanity seeks opiates—drink, excitement, gambling. Even literature and religion become escapes. The economics arrived at by the study of such a society must be misleading, because men do not know their genuine needs. In this paper I have endeavoured to show how the doctrines that influence human conduct today—capitalistic, Marxian or Freudian—hinder the growth of man. If self-fulfilment is sought in terms of power or pleasure there can be nothing but privation. We cannot solve our problems without recognizing the spiritual basis of economics.

RACE AND RELIGION

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There is a tendency among certain sociologists and even indologists to believe that all creations of the human mind, science and mathematics no less than philosophy and religion, are determined by race. But the history of religion teaches us, first of all, that certain religious phenomena such as animism, deification and worship of trees and animals, ancestor-worship, the idea of *mana* or supernatural power, the belief in the efficacy of magic rites and of sacrifices, in holy persons possessing supernatural powers, in lower and higher deities, and even in One Supreme

Deity, however it may be conceived, are found among ancient and primitive peoples of very different races. Moreover, the ideas which underlie all these religious phenomena, continue to live on in some way or other among civilized peoples of every race even to the present day.

Neither the deities of ancient Egypt nor those of ancient Greece and Rome were limited to peoples of one race. Aryan and non-Aryan cults and deities are inseparably mixed already in the Vedic religion of ancient India and still more in Hinduism. Even what is called "Teutonic religion" is clearly syncretistic, as Professor Max Haller, in his address as Rector of the University of Bern (*Religion and Races*, 1935, p. 11 ff.) has shown.

When we come to the deepest religious thoughts and the highest of the Godhead, whether we find them in the sayings of Yājñavalkya or Buddha, of Lao-tse, of Issaiah or Plato, it is absurd to ascribe their origin to any specific race or nation. Professor Rudolf Otto compares (in his study *Die Urgestalt der Bhagavad Gita*. Tübingen, 1934, p. 27 ff.) Īśvara of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* with the grand God-intuition of the *Book of Job* and of the *Book of St. Paul*, and adds that such parallels should warn us against deriving such ideas from the race, for Job was an Edomite and St. Paul a Jew, both Semites.

The very existence of the world-religions, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, seems to prove that religion is not, like the shape of the skull, the colour of the skin, eyes and hair, determined by race. One might say that Christianity and Islam were forced upon many peoples by the power of the sword and not accepted by their own free will. But this can certainly not be said of Buddhism which spread to wide areas of Eastern and Southern Asia without the stroke of a sword among peoples of many different races.

It is possible to state something, though very little, about the soul or character of *nations* or *peoples*, but hardly anything of *races*. Nothing has caused so much confusion as the mixing up of the terms "nation," "people" and "race." *Race* is a division of mankind distinguished by similar bodily structure (more especially skull, colour of skin, hair, eyes, stature) and

assumed to be of common origin though in a distant past, while *people* (*nation*) is a group of men living under the same geographical and climatic conditions, sharing the same language, culture, traditions and history, and being, at least to some extent, of the same "blood" or "race." The latter, however, is by no means always the case, but more often only a pious belief. The most important factor, however, in the making of a *people* or *nation* is the feeling of belonging together, the consciousness of belonging to one and the same group of mankind—a factor which is entirely absent in what is called *race*.

To be sure, nobody will deny that there are differences of character and mental habits between the English, Irish, French, German, Czech, Norwegian, American, Jewish, Indian, Persian, Chinese and Japanese peoples. But we have no means to decide how far these differences of character arise from common descent, and how far they are the result of environment, of the common geographical, historical and cultural conditions. Nor should it be forgotten that greater than all the differences between nations are the differences in character between individuals of the same nation. As in ancient Greece we meet not only with an Achilles but also with a Thersites, so also we find in every nation weak, wise and foolish, selfless, sacrificing and saintly, and unselfish, greedy, and criminal men.

Though all generalizations are dangerous and pernicious, and it is always risky to speak about *the* Indian, or *the* Englishman or *the* German, and above all, though any verdict against a whole nation or a whole race cannot but be unjust, yet it is possible to speak, with the necessary caution, of "national character" or "soul of a people." But the talk about a "race-soul," that is about the mental and spiritual structure of any of the larger divisions of mankind, such as Nordic, or Oriental, or Negroid, or Mongolian races, has very little scientific foundation. The difficulty begins already with the larger ethnical groups. It is easier to describe the Russian or the Czech than the "Slav." Still more vague are such terms as "Aryans" or "Semites" which include peoples of entirely different characters.

No doubt, the outward forms of religion are different among

different peoples and nations, among men of different races. But the deepest roots of all religious life and experience lie in the *human* heart and in human needs, not in the peculiar mental structure of any particular race or nation. When the Negro in Western Africa in the moment of danger calls out, "Help us, Paia Njambe!" or when the Burmese in the hour of need cries out to his God, "Karai Kasang, look upon me! Karai Kasang, help me!" these people give expression to the same feelings as the Psalmist when he exclaims, "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me . . . Yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast" (*Psalm* 57), or when the Vedic Indian implores the God Varuna: "Have mercy, spare me, Mighty Lord" (*Rig-Veda* VII, 89).

In a letter dated Easter Monday 1934, D. Albert Schweitzer wrote that his experiences among the savages in Africa had not taken away from him the belief in mankind, and that "*the same Man is to be found in every human being.*" Who could be a better witness than he who has not only studied and taught, but *lived* religion like few men living? No, *true religion is not a matter of race, but a matter of man, of humanity.*

CHAPTER VII

SECTION III

The Religious Systems of the World

IDEALS OF ISLAM

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ISLAM

Islam is a religion of universal brotherhood. It makes no distinction between caste and caste, and creed and creed. Its broad principles generally aim at perfection of humanity and formation of one nationality as the Holy Koran declares, "Man belongs to one nationality." Islam strictly prohibits application of force for its observance: "There is no compulsion in religion."

Islam is not an advocate of formality and show in religion ; it hates hypocrisy. It does not attribute any sanctity to the sacrifices of animals—it requires sacrifices of inner selves. It enjoins, no doubt, external purification of the body for health and hygiene, but it demands internal purification of hearts for true salvation of human souls. It is very catholic and liberal in its ideas and theories of religion.

Islam is a great respecter of the fair sex ; it allows women to maintain equality with men. The daughter of a Muslim inherits the property of her father like her brother. The *purdah* of women within four walls or the wearing of *borkha* with nets upon eyes is not Islamic: In the time of Hazrat Mohammed (peace and blessings of God be upon him) women took part in all activities, political, social and religious.

PRAYER

Namaz, the daily prayer of Islam, has nowadays been more or less a matter of formality with many Muslims. Very often we pray to please the people or to make a show that we are pious. Such prayer is fruitless and harmful as it fosters hypocrisy. It misses the real object of prayer—sincere reverence for God.

"Verily I am God ; there is no God except myself ; then worship me and perform *Namaz* to remember me only " (Taha). The main object of prayer is to remember God only and to be grateful to Him. To sing the endless glories of God and to

remember Him with gratefulness and devotion for His limitless mercy towards man is, no doubt, the first object of prayer. If anyone forgets this and says prayer for prayer's sake or does it to make a show before men, then he gains nothing by that prayer. The Koran declares: "When they stand for prayer, they do so regardless (of what they do); they make a show to men and remember God very little; they cheat themselves; they are neither on this side nor on that" (Nesha).

Muslims are required to perform ablutions before prayer; but mere external abluion with water is not sufficient for the purpose of remembering God. The foremost duty of man is to remove the innermost sin of his heart; only prayer with a pure mind shall be fruitful. The Koran declares:

"He gained (by prayer) who purified himself and remembered the name of God and then performed his prayer."

There is no possibility of external or internal sin, if the prayer is performed with sincere purity of heart. The evil deeds of man are the outcome of evil desires of the heart; it is not possible to remember God in prayer when the mind is impure, so it is necessary before prayer. But to purify hearts and minds is to abstain from evil works, so it amounts to the declaration of the holy Koran, "Perform prayer, surely prayer keeps men aloof from committing evil and undesirable works" (Ankabut).

There is no asceticism in Islam; so prayer is to be performed amidst other duties of the world. Some people have got wrong ideas that no work on Friday is to be done before or after *Namaz*; that is not what the Koran preaches:

"Oh believers, when you are called for Jumma prayer, (make haste to) run in order to remember God and give up worldly business for the time being. That is better for you if you really understand it. But when the prayer is performed, scatter yourselves on the earth and seek for the blessings of God and remember Him often so that you may gain" (Juma).

ABOUT THE SO-CALLED MONOPOLY OF RELIGION

"The Jews say 'The religion of the Christians is not founded

on truth'; the Christians say 'The religion of the Jews is not founded on truth;' both of them are reading scriptures of the same faith. Similarly those who are quite ignorant of facts are also repeating the same like them." (Bakara).

They say, "None shall enter Paradise except the Jews and the Christians"—that is their own fancy and imagination. Tell them, "If you speak the truth, then bring your proofs. Nay—whoso accepts the faith of peace and turns his face towards God and performs good works, then for him his reward is with his Lord. There is no fear for them nor shall they grieve" (Bakara).

Islam does never hold the theory that salvation is a monopoly for one set of people only. A man, whatever be his name or nationality, may attain salvation by his faith and good works, so declares the Koran.

Verily those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians and Sabians—whoever believes in one God and the Day of Judgment and performs good works—there is reward for them with their Lord and there is no fear for them nor shall they grieve.

The essence of religion is one, but it is men who differ in their opinions and think it otherwise. According to Islamic faith firm belief in one God is the essence of true religion. Declare thou, O, people of the Book, come to a common word of religion between us and you—that we will not serve any except one God nor join with Him anything nor shall regard one of us the other for lords except God. Abraham was not a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a pious and peaceful man and he was not of the polytheists.

ABOUT KORBANI

"The flesh and blood of the sacrificed animals shall never reach God, but your piety (of sincere sacrifices of hearts) shall only reach God." The philosophy of the above Koranic saying is this—that the flesh and blood of the camels or cows or goats or sheep you kill, shall not bring salvation for you. Your salvation lies in the sacrifices of your hearts and money; sacrifices of your time and energy for the welfare of the community and country, for

the uplift of the humanity, for the effort to remove the grievances of the oppressed and the depressed of mankind.

There is no piety in the movement of turning your face eastward or westward. And to Him belongs the East and West, so in whatever direction you turn your face you will feel His existence (Bakara).

RESPECT FOR WOMEN

Abdulla, son of Omar, says, "Hazrat Mohammed (peace and blessings of God be upon him) said, 'Everything in the world is a useful gift but the honest women are the noblest of all gifts in the world.' " My Muslim brethren, do we follow the tradition of our Prophet?—No! In defiance of the saying we always say "Women are the root causes of all the evils of the world," and we are not ashamed of repeating the same in course of our conversation whenever occasion arises. It has become a fashion with our Munshis and Mullahs to mention these un-Islamic and ignoble sayings everywhere, be it a congregational prayer of the mosque or the assembly of the 'Eid' prayer,—not to speak of other small gatherings. Such sayings are opposed to the principles and teachings of our Holy Prophet Hazrat Mohammed who is admitted, by his strongest enemies even, to be a great respecter of women.

RELATIONSHIP OF GOD WITH MEN

Can there be any relation between the Great and Glorious God and the very weak human beings whom He has created and has been most wondrously maintaining with His care and wisdom?

When we ponder over His creation, so great and so glorious, and compare it with the human beings, they seem to be most insignificant. But what of that? Man is one of His wonderful creations. He has created him with care, skill and wisdom as peerless gems of the earth. Can He therefore forget the noblest of His creations? That can never be. The Almighty God declares, "I am not forgetful of my creations" (Al-Momenin).

God is in close touch with man and He is not far from him.

He is ever existent in the immortal soul of the mortal man, as He declares, "Let it be known to you that God visits man and his heart and ultimately you will all appear before Him" (Anfal). "Verily, I have created man and I am aware of what he whispers in his mind because I am nearer to him than his jugular veins." "And He is with you wherever you are and He is aware of all that you do" (Hadid). That is not all. The door of the inexhaustible store of His kindness is ever open for man. He is man's guardian and helper. "And it is sufficient that God is his guardian, patron and great helper" (Nesha). "But lest he should show his devotion to God out of fear only, being afraid of the awful aspect of His creation He advises man—the last of His creations—to recognize Him as his Guardian and Guide." "O Creator of the Earth and Heaven! You are my only Guardian and Helper both in this world and in the world to come. Take me, therefore, to You while I am peaceful and faithful and allow me to enjoy the company of the Pious ones."

THE CHRISTIAN VIEWPOINT

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Christianity is associated with and derives its name from Christ who is known as Jesus Christ. Jesus taught about a good many things and these form what we call Christian teaching. The main things only I shall write about in this paper.

I

God is a spirit. Hence God is not material and therefore is not confined to some portion of space or other like material things. He is omnipresent. We know what a spirit is. Everyone of us as spirit thinks, feels and wills. God thinks, God knows. He knows everything present in the Universe, everything that was in it and everything that will be in the future, including the thoughts in every human mind. He feels—He loves

His creatures with infinite love. He loves all the sons of men. He is full of joy when we do the right and full of pain when we do the wrong. As the late Dr. Fairbairn of Mansfield College, Oxford, says in one of his works—"The impossibility of God is a monstrous doctrine." That God loves us is proved by the genial sunshine without which His creatures would die, the rains that fertilize the soil and without which crops supplying man's food would not grow. He willed the universe into existence. He wishes that we should do His will which is holy and should desist from going against it. In short, Christianity speaks of a Personal God.

II

God is the Father of all. The God whom Christ revealed is not indifferent to human affairs. He is not the God of the Epicureans, who when men are famished for want of food, smiles, who when a cry goes out of the hearts of men, finds sweet music therein—"a music centred in a doleful song." He is not the God of the Deists either, who having created the world and implanted laws in it has withdrawn Himself from it. The God of whom Jesus Christ spoke is immanent in the universe and also transcendent. As our Heavenly Father He loves us all with infinite love and promotes our welfare, aye welfare in the highest degree. He therefore provides all that is necessary not only for our bodily welfare, but also for our mental and spiritual welfare. Hence He sent His Son, Jesus Christ into the world so that believing in Him we may have life everlasting, i.e. eternal life, holy and happy like God's.

III

As God is the Father of all, all men are brothers. Hence Jesus Christ said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you too." All men are brothers, because they are all members of the family of God, only some are His obedient and some disobedient children. Christ said that just as God makes the sun rise and the rains descend on all, so we must treat all, even our enemies, as our brothers. Indeed if Christ's teaching is carried out, wars

will cease, and love, joy and friendship—the emblems of what was lost in Eden—will reign paramount in every land.

IV

God has provided a Saviour for all men—Jesus Christ. He alone can save men from the power and dominion of sin and breathe into them His spirit, so that vile sinners that cast themselves unreservedly upon Him as their only Lord and Saviour are transformed into veritable saints, effulgent with holiness and radiant with purity. It is only by Christ's death on the Cross in Calvary that our sins are atoned for and we spiritually thrive. This atonement made by Christ is a fact, though we with our limitations may not be able to understand thoroughly how by the death of One we may live. But what the Christian doctrine of atonement teaches is quite in keeping with what we see every day in our lives. How is it that our physical lives thrive? By eating rice, *dal*, fish, etc., what does all this mean? Surely that the lives of vegetables and animals must perish in order that our bodies may live. Now the God who is at the helm of the ship of the physical universe and steers its course is also at the helm of the ship of the spiritual universe and steers its course—His law is one and the same for both the physical and the spiritual world. So Christ's *death* has brought spiritual life to men. Further, those who have accepted this atonement as a fact have felt that really they have got the power to conquer sin and Satan. Hence Christian experience bears unshakable testimony to the truth of the doctrine.

V

In our Godhead there are three Persons—Father, Son and Holy Ghost or Spirit. Christ taught it when He gave His commission to His disciples to go into all the world and teach all nations and baptize them. Now it may be said that this doctrine of Trinity cannot be understood. How can there be three persons in one Godhead? In reply it may be said, "Are there not three functions or faculties of one mind—knowing, feeling and willing?" Again, we have to remember that our finite minds

cannot comprehend the Infinite and Christianity as true religion must have mysteries. If it preached such a conception of God as would be thoroughly understood, that would mean that it was a religion manufactured by the human mind. But as Sir William Hamilton, the great Edinburgh metaphysician, said, "An understood God is not a God at all." True indeed this! For a God understood by the finite human mind is not the infinite God that He really is, but a God limited and therefore not the true God.

It will, however, be said, "Is not all this conception of God based on the teaching of Jesus Christ? What guarantee is there that He taught the full truth about God and nothing but truth?" The answer is that when we scan His life through and through, we find Him to be perfect, holy, spotless. And holiness is the crowning attribute of God. Therefore Christ must be believed to be Divine. Of no mere man can it be said that he is perfectly holy. In the case of mere men there is not a single one showing perfect balance of faculties. Carlyle who was an intellectual giant lacked self-control. His outbursts of temper show this, they reveal weak will-power. Even in the case of reformers of the Christian Church, Zwingli, Luther, Calvin, as D'Anligne says in his *History of Reformation*, one of them had the heart or emotional side predominating, another the volitional side and a third the intellect predominating. But none of them had a perfect balance of faculties. What is it, however, that we find in the case of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour? While a mere man, if he is a religious enthusiast, is apt to act imprudently, far different was the case with Jesus. The zeal for the house of God had eaten Him up, He drove out those that had turned the Temple into a house of trade, money-making, but while as yet His time for death had not come and they attempted His life, He made himself scarce. Again, in the case of a human parent we find that if he is tender-hearted, the spirits of authority are relaxed in him and his children are spoiled, because of his indulgence. Charles Fox, when he was six years old, asked his father to give him his gold chain and watch. "Why?" his father asked. He said "I want to tread them under my foot and break them now and here."

The father's eldest child was born with a disease in the spinal cord. The father knew that he would be useless and so his heart was set upon Charlie. "Charlie must grow to be an independent statesman and so his will must not be broken"—said the father to himself. He gave him the chain and watch and Charlie broke them in his presence. The father was exceedingly tender-hearted and therefore did not punish Charlie when he should have done it, nay indulged him. And so Charlie, though he was gifted with resplendent powers of oratory and a heart that felt for aliens, pestered his kith and kin, had a bad upbringing and turned out a gambler too. Far different was the case with Jesus of Nazareth. Out in the desert he finds the famished multitude and feeds it miraculously with food. The son of the widow of Nair is being carried on a bier, Jesus' heart goes out to her. He restores the young man to life. But if Jesus knew to be tender, aye, beyond all description, he knew to be just and indignant when the occasion demanded. From human lips there never flashed forth such burning words of indignation as those which fell from the lips of Jesus as He viewed the hollowness, the hypocrisy of the people around, you would almost say, He called them names. He compared the Pharisees to whitened sepulchres containing corpses within, so outwardly they looked religious, but were vile inwardly in their hearts. He called them a generation of vipers. These facts from His life go to show that in Him there was a beautiful unison of the most opposite qualities, a perfect balance of the faculties. He must be regarded as perfectly holy. When He boldly asked his enemies, "Which of you convinceth me" (i.e. convicteth me) "of sin?" they were speechless. None could point out any sin in His life.

And so this Jesus had stood before men in all ages and has challenged all to find any sin in Him. The whole world is bound to say "Thou, O Jesus, art Divine. Thou art God-man, the Incarnation of God, for Thou alone amongst the sons of men art perfectly holy." And it is because Jesus is Divine that we can say that what He teaches about God is perfectly true. Hence we Christians accept all His teaching about God (including the doctrine of Trinity) as coming from one who from eternity has been with God and is God.

THE TENETS OF THE JAIN RELIGION

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"Religion is the highest bliss: non-injury, self-restraint and penance are the component parts thereof; even gods bow down to those who are religious."

All living beings hanker after happiness. Real happiness, however, is hardly attained by any one. The standard of happiness also varies according to the conception of each individual. Complete happiness, unrestricted by any cares and worries and unlimited in its scope and duration, is possible only in the liberated state. That state is known as '*mukti*' in Jain phraseology. Its exact English synonym is hard to find. "Salvation," "Liberation" or "Emancipation" is the ordinary word which is used to denote '*mukti*.' How *mukti* is attained and what stages must be reached in the search for the final goal have been minutely described in the Jain Scriptures. It is not our desire to deal here in detail with these stages or modes of attaining salvation. In the present-day materialistic world, to try to convince people about the necessity of striving for *mukti* may sound inopportune. But when the ultimate goal is kept before the mind's eye and when it is shown how that goal may be reached by controlling our passions and regulating our mode of life, without all of a sudden giving up the amenities and advantages of all that the modern scientific inventions place within our reach, it would be easier for all to consider whether it is worth while to have before us the goal of *mukti* and to follow the path leading to it. It may be noted in passing that Jainism does not put it down as an axiomatic truth that no other religion than Jainism shows the path leading to the attainment of the highest happiness or *mukti*. Jainism in this respect is most tolerant. In fact, by whatever creed one is known and whatever school of philosophy one may follow, if the universal truths on which is based the foundation of *mukti*, are followed by any one, he is sure to reach the ultimate goal, sooner or later. But Jainism claims that although other

religions may show the paths, the final stage is reached by processes pointed out in the Jain Scriptures.

Jainism is a religion which is not of recent growth. We claim that it is existing from time immemorial. As there cannot be fixed any time from which Truth can be traced, we say that Jainism cannot be limited to any particular time.

Jainism divides the entire world into two main divisions, viz. sentient beings (*jīva*), and non-sentient things (*ajīva*). It is the combination of the *jīva* and *ajīva* that causes all the divergence in this world. When the soul is stripped of all its *ajīva* bondage, it becomes pure and attains its ultimate *mukti* stage.

Jīva or sentient beings and *ajīva* or non-sentient things have no origin. They have been in existence in the past, they are present now and they will exist in future. When the combination of the two occurred is not explicable. From time immemorial they have been found intermingled.

“*Dharma*”, meaning “religion” is a word which from its derivation means that which keeps the soul from falling downwards. The inherent quality of every soul is to go up. The bonds which keep it down and attached to this world, are those of *karma*—good or bad actions. To free it from its bondage is our duty. The more the *karma* particles are removed, the lighter becomes the soul, and when it is completely freed, it becomes absolutely light and pure and having nothing to keep it down, it at once goes up to the abode of the Liberated, the *Siḍḍha-kshetra*, which is at the top of this universe.

According to the Jains, sentient beings or *jīvas* are innumerable and so also are the non-sentient beings or *ajīva*. Although from time to time many a being has attained salvation and although those who have been so far liberated and who will in future be liberated are also innumerable, such is the infinitely endless number of *jīvas* that they never come to an end and this universe will always contain innumerable living beings.

So long as *jīva* is bound down by *ajīva*, it roams about in this world. It is only when all the *karmas* (which are *ajīva*) are completely got rid of that the *jīva* attains salvation, never comes

back from that liberated state and goes up to the highest plane which is at the top of this world. There—where there is no old age or infirmity—the liberated souls remain for ever, omniscient, all-blissful, undergoing no birth or death, suffering no affliction or worries. That state is the embodiment of unadulterated, pure and everlasting joy. To describe it in words is an impossible task, as there is nothing in this world which can be compared with that state. Having no desires, the liberated souls have nothing to care for. That state is the ultimate goal of every living being. According to the Jain Scriptures, the divine beings have also to come back to the human stage before they can attain salvation. The Jains believe in transmigration of souls. Every soul has to take births and rebirths until it annihilates all its *karmas*. Divine beings go to heaven to enjoy during their long life the results of their good actions, but at the end of divine life they revert to this world again. It is the human stage where the practice of religion and the control of desires are possible. Divine or heavenly beings immersed in the utmost happiness, care not for the future uplift of the soul or for the control of their unlimited desires. Having enough means to satisfy their desires they care not for the future, and that is why according to Jainism, there is no further promotion from the heavenly state. According to the Jains, the human stage is the stepping stone to complete liberation or *mukti*. To utilize this stage in our self-evolution should be our supreme duty.

Nations, states, societies and families are all due to the association of several beings, and as in this world there are also various other kinds of living beings besides the human beings and each living being is a separate entity and unit, the development of one soul helps in the development of other souls, as it stands out as an example. According to the Jains, by his own good actions every living being can attain the higher and higher state of evolution and from the human stage can ultimately reach its goal. To free ourselves from the bondage of *karma* is the prime consideration, and it is only by right knowledge, right perception, right conduct and self-control or penance that the bonds of accumulated *karma* can be loosened and destroyed. Jainism shows the different modes of practising these, but if

these modes are also practised by any one professing any other religion, he is also sure to tread the path leading to Salvation.

Before dealing with the main causes of the forces of *karma*, it would be better if we briefly touch upon some technical terms of Jain Philosophy.

Jiva, the living being or soul is sub-divided into two main categories—*siddha* or liberated and *samsāri* or worldly beings. Worldly beings are divided into many different sub-divisions, such as: (i) *trasa* (moving) and *sthāvara* (stationary); (ii) the four *jāti* or stages of life—heavenly beings (*devas*), human beings (*manushya*), infra-human (*tiryach*) and hellish (*nāraka*); (iii) the five classes, viz., one-organned (having body only), two-organned (having body and organ of taste), three-organned (having body, taste and smell), four-organned (having body and organs of taste, smell and sight) and five-organned (having body and organs of taste, smell, sight and hearing), and so on and so forth into other sub-divisions. With the mixing up of different *karma* particles, the living beings acquire different shapes and stages, but their inherent qualification is the same. To illustrate this by a simple example, it may be noted that just as gold may be transformed into various ornaments, but the main thing remains gold all the while, so also every living being has the same inherent quality of consciousness, although it may have different degrees of the same or may be in different planes. Just as different moulds give the same gold different names, so also different *karman*s give the soul a body, a shape and qualities which differ from those of other souls.

Ajiva or non-sentient things are those which have no consciousness, *which either exist by themselves or are so mixed with conscious beings that it is difficult to separate them, and which are the cause of the fall of the pure stage of soul*. *Ajiva* falls into five main sub-divisions, viz., *dharmāstikāya* (or that substance which helps soul and matter to move), *adharmaastikāya* (or that substance which helps the soul or matter to rest), *ākāśasti* (or space, that substance which gives shelter to the living and non-living), *kāla* (time) and *puṅgava* (matter).

Punya is the effect of good actions (*śubha karma*) and *pāpa*

is the effect of evil actions (*aśubha karma*). Just as regulated diet increases healthiness and irregular diet increases disease, so also when a living being has an abundance of *punya karma* its happiness increases, when it has an abundance of *pāpa karma* its miseries increase, and *when both the good and evil actions are eliminated* the soul attains *moksha* or is liberated.

Āsrava or the inflow of *karma*, *saṁvara* or the stoppage of *karma*, and *nirjara*, the *partial* elimination of *karma* may be best described by illustrations, thus: just as water enters a vessel by any *leak* it has, so also *karma* particles enter the *jīva* and are known as *āsrava*. To stop the leak or inflow of *karma* is *saṁvara* and to pump out the incoming flow of *karma* is *nirjara*. All living beings, if they are not alert and if they do not stop the inflow of *karma*, are liable to be bound by *karma* particles, and this binding up of soul with *karma* is *bondage* or *bandha*.

Moksha is the complete separation or elimination of *karma* from the *jīva*, and as soon as that stage is reached the soul or life becomes free.

As must have been noticed from the definitions of our technical terms, it is the mingling up of soul with *karma* particles that is at the root of all unhappiness. We Jains believe and hold that every living being has many inherent qualities. It has immense potentialities, it has immense knowledge, it is full of infinite capacity for eliminating *karma*-bondages, it can also attain infinite happiness and it can also endure the utmost afflictions caused by *karma*.

Jain religion teaches us how best to develop our souls into their full glorious state, and ~~in~~ the meantime how to conduct ourselves so as to make this world happier and more contented. According to the Jains, all the evils of this world owe their origin to *rāga* and *dvesha* (attachment and animosity). Animosity is apparently an evil to be discarded. But attachment also is as much to be discarded as animosity. Both are causes of bondage. Both pollute the mind. Whereas animosity causes injury to others, attachment causes undue preference to one's beloved being or matter, (*jīva* or *aṁjīva*), and it may be called *moha* (infatuousness). This *rāga* or *moha* entangles the mind with the

object of attachment and any the least separation causes affliction. Animosity is easily discernible, but it is difficult to consider attachment as a cause of bondage. Worldly beings all over are suffering from the bondages of attachment and animosity and Jainism teaches us how to get rid of these two principal causes of worldly evils. The Jain Scriptures lay down the paths to be followed by laymen and by monks.

There are those who give up all worldly connections and take the holy orders and try to speed up their march towards *mukti*; they are known as *sādhus* or monks. They take life-long vows of absolute renunciation. They do not injure any living being and do not countenance or cause injury to others even by thought, speech or action. They take five vows which are the five great principles, viz., non-injury, not to speak falsehood, not to steal, not to have sexual intercourse and not to own property. As this stage is not for ordinary householders, we do not here dilate much on it. We only want to impress upon the world at large that Jain *sādhus* or ascetics are embodiments of what true renunciation is. How much privation they undergo in strictly observing the five great vows! They dedicate their lives for the uplift of not only their own souls but also those of all laymen. We would invite every true lover of old institutions and all seekers after truth to pay a visit to Jain Svetamber Terapanthi *sādhus* and to find out what discipline, what strictness, what hardship, what lofty character and what depth of morality they possess.

For worldly beings who cannot take the holy orders and also for ordinary laymen Jainism affords ample opportunities for the ennoblement of their souls. It shows the path for each individual and if the rules of conduct laid down for the laymen are widely followed, then this world would become a better place, a happier place and a more contented place, and there would be less of struggle for existence, there would be less animosity, less run for power. Contentment and peace is the guiding principle of these rules of conduct which are of a milder form than those enjoined for *sādhus*. Non-injury to all living beings and reverence for holy men are the principal factors which should guide all the actions of all those who are desirous of attaining *mukti*.

Ahimsā or non-injury to all *sentient* beings is the foundation of Jainism, nay, of all ancient and modern religions. But Jainism alone tells us comprehensively and in detail what sentient beings are. It does not interpret sentient beings as those of only a particular race or religion. By sentient beings it means not only all human beings; but also all animals and beasts, all living creatures, as also vegetable and mineral beings and the term even includes the visible and the invisible beings consisting of 'air life,' 'water life' and 'fire life.' Long long before modern science could even dream that air, water, fire, minerals and vegetables had life and consciousness, the Jains declared that living beings are of six kinds, viz. the one-organned: fire, air, water, earth and vegetable; the two-organned; the three-organned; the four-organned and the five organned animals and human beings. The Jains declare that every other living being is as much susceptible to pains and pleasures as human beings are, and as such it is the duty of every person not to hurt any of the sentient beings. As a layman cannot practise and observe the principle of 'non-injury' in all its aspects, the least that is expected of a true follower of Jainism or universal brotherhood is that he should not do unprovoked such a thing as would hurt or injure any innocent moving or living being without any rhyme or reason. This limited ideal only is put forth for a layman, because he is in a sense circumscribed by the needs of his daily life. Yet this very narrow and simple form of non-injury, if pursued with care and caution, may lead to higher and higher development of his soul and may enable him to gradually enlarge his scope of practising non-injury in its fullest sense. True *ahimsā* is the refraining from killing, hurting or injuring. To save the life of a sentient being is not the primary aim of a person preaching *ahimsā*. His aim is not to kill, hurt or injure. If by refraining from killing, he saves any animal, he does so not with the object of saving that animal but with the sole object of saving himself from the sin of an evil act. It is really kindness to one's own self.

Similarly in the case of truthfulness; to speak absolute unadulterated truth is possible only for those saints and ascetics who have given up the world and taken to holy orders. Jain *sādhus* would keep silent where speaking the truth would cause injury

to others. They do not complain against any evil-doer, they do not give evidence for or against any person because that may cause bodily injury to the accused. They are absolutely indifferent to any act of aggression or oppression against their own person even. But this sort of absolute truth-telling is not possible for a layman, and therefore as a stepping stone to the practice of the higher form of truth, laymen are to begin by guarding against speaking any falsehood on oath or regarding any deposit of property, which may cause breach of trust. If every layman were to practise the art of speaking truth in the broadest sense, many of the social evils would disappear.

Turning now to the third principal article of faith, viz. non-stealing, it may be stated at once that *sādhus* or ascetics would not take a piece of straw even without the permission of the owner. They beg everything which they require. They live in houses with the permission of the owner. They vacate and give up the house or country, if the owner of the house or land refuses permission to him to live there. Such high order of non-stealing is not possible for a layman, and it is enough if he abstains from taking anything of value without the permission of the owner or taking a stolen article, or causing house-breaking or transgressing the laws of the land.

The fourth principle is that of *brahmacharya* or refraining from sexual intercourse. It requires the highest form of self-restraint. Of all the passions the sex passion is the one which is the most difficult to control. For an ascetic or *sādhu*, the most scrupulous observance of *brahmacharya* is absolutely necessary. He is not only to observe *brahmacharya* himself, but also not to countenance by word, speech or action any violation of it by any one. But for a layman having family ties and friendships and having many dependants, it is not possible to strictly observe *brahmacharya* in all the different ways, because he has to contract marriages of his near and dear ones and thus indirectly countenance sexual intercourse. The layman or laywoman therefore takes the vow of being content with sexual connections only with the partner in life and of avoiding any illicit intercourse with any other living being. The most sacred foundation of family

happiness and of social integrity and purity is based on the observance of this principle of *brāhmacharya*. Most of the offences against woman and society would disappear, if the Jain view of *brāhmacharya* and how to observe it were widely known.

The fifth main principle of Jainism is restriction of possession of property. A monk or *sādhu* is not to own any property. He has no houses, no landed properties, no riches. He begs his daily food and water and articles of clothing when required, lives in others' houses and does not keep even a particle of metal, say even a needle for his use. If he wants anything he has to beg for it and return it during the course of the day. He is not to store any article of food or drink after sunset. He has to keep with himself only limited articles of dress and receptacles. As he has no riches to pay and does not ask others to pay, he has to walk barefooted and carry his own load. He does not hold correspondence with any layman and does not buy any articles for himself, nor does he take anything bought or procured for him. But such a high standard of non-possession is possible only for a *sādhu*. For a layman the teaching of Jainism is to limit his possessions. Unlimited or unrestricted desire for possession leads to discontent. Self-control is the ideal and limiting one's desire for possessions depends on self-control. There have been millionaires and multi-millionaires, there have been emperors and kings with vast dominions and possessions, but so long as they failed to control their desire for possessions, they were engrossed with the only idea of increasing them. Contentment they had none, peace of mind they seldom had. They thought always of riches and possessions. The life of an ordinary mortal is limited, but the riches of this world are unlimited. It is difficult therefore to satisfy the unrestricted demands of any one. It is therefore of supreme importance that every individual every society, every nation and every state should limit their desire for possession. Possessions without limit increase the desire, and non-fulfilment thereof causes discontent. All the evils of this world, all the conflicts, all the races for supremacy are due to unrestricted desire for possessions. Everyone knows that. Every religion proclaims that. Yet none dare preach limitation of possessions or need for

contentment. How much the world is now in need of this, is apparent to all readers of contemporary history.

We have dealt in brief with the main principles of Jainism ; we have not so far dealt with the question of what Jainism has to say regarding God, whether He is the creator or otherwise. That would be going into a controversial question. To answer it in brief, Jainism does not think of God as a creator. That would be attributing to Him qualities which least befit Him. The Jain idea of Godhood is the perfected soul—the liberated soul (*siddha* and *mukta*). Every soul has latent Godhood in him. It is the *karma* particles that wrap up its inherent qualities and make it roam about in this world. To stop the inflow of *karma*, to destroy the already accumulated *karma* and to bring out all the best qualities of the soul is the supreme need. There are eight kinds of *karmas* and it is necessary to destroy them all by good actions and by penances for past bad conduct. It is not in the scope of this article to describe them in detail. We would refer the inquisitive soul to the sacred literature of the Jains in general and to the Jain *sādhus* in particular. The Jains adore those only as their God, who have destroyed all *karmas* and attained salvation, they accept those only as their preceptors who have given up all worldly connections and controlled selfish desires and who lead the life of true *sādhus* and they accept that only as the universal and true religion which is promulgated by the true God and the true preceptor.

Jainism is a religion which teaches us to treat all sentient beings as inherently equal. It enjoins on us consideration for the feelings of all beings. It thus preaches universal brotherhood not only of human beings, but of all sentient beings. It aims at the uplift of the soul and for that purpose enjoins on all its followers exercise of the greatest self-control. It strongly deprecates the action of those who for the aggrandizement of the self or for their own selfish ends hurt the feelings of others. To treat others in the same way as one's own self is its principal teaching and once this fact is realized, all other questions are easily solved. The universal truths or principles of religion as preached by Jainism are non-injury to others, non-speaking of falsehood, non-

stealing, non-indulgence in sexual matters and restriction of possession, and they are all recognised by all schools of thought as sound principles, and whoever practises them develops his character. There is no caste or creed, race or nation that cannot follow the principles of Jainism. Any one following any profession may strive to become a Jain or follow the principles leading to the ultimate goal. All outward manifestations of inequality in the world owe their origin to various *karma* forces, but that does not in any way interfere with the practice of the true principles. Equality of all beings, fraternity with the whole world and liberation of every soul are the watchword of Jainism, and must also be the watchwords of every other religion having the object of the uplift of the world before them.

The Jains hold that their religion as promulgated by omniscient sages is perfect. But Jain religion enjoins that not one of its principles is to be forced on any one. The heart is to be converted by reasoning only. Religion is to be practised by one's own self, not through agents or substitutes. It is by the restraint of body, mind and speech that religion can be practised. "Mind is the cause of bondage or liberation of man." It is the preaching of the evil effects of a wrongful act and persuading people to give up that wrongful act, which is really commendable and religious. No force and no bribing will make one change one's heart. So long as you do not touch the heart of the evil-doer, you cannot even by force make him give up his evil desires. To control one's own desire and to practise restraint upon one's own self is real religion and to preach the good effects of self-control and self-restraint and induce others to practise the same is the highest service that mankind may do and is the purest form of religion. As all the woes and worries of this world are due to unrestricted indulgence in passions and consequent disregard for others' feelings, it is of supreme importance that the universal principles of Jainism, namely *ahimsā*, *satya*, *āsteya*, *brahmacharya* and *aparigraha* should be widely followed and preached and the practice of these whether on a limited or a wide scale would gradually lead to the purification of the soul and the uplifting of it to higher and higher planes. Remember—

“ One may conquer millions of persons in a battle, but one who conquers his own self is the greatest conqueror.”

It is necessary therefore to practise religion as has been truly said in the following words:

“ So long as you are not old, so long as you are not overcome by diseases, so long as your senses are not weakened, till that you must practise religion.”

THE MESSAGE OF ZOROASTER

PROF. SIR JAHANGIRJEE COYAJEE

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With the progress of human thought and experience we have new and better tests which might be applied for judging the merits of religious systems. Let us envisage a few of them. Has the particular religious system taken into account all the realities of the world in attempting to place a spiritual interpretation on them? Does its teaching tend to improve the world and to advance its civilization? Has it maintained the proper balance between the needs of personal salvation and the duty to contribute to social progress—between the life of contemplation and the life of action? Has the prophetic imagination respected the claims of science? Has the system a contribution to make to the maintenance of the world's peace?

Now the very first of the five extant sermons (*Gāthās*) of Zoroaster shows how well he has taken into account the basic realities of life. It is far too easy to preach a mechanical Monotheism or Monism neglecting the great and fundamental factor of the struggle for existence—a struggle and mortal conflict in which not only individuals, races and types but Truth and Virtue itself are involved. There is no particular virtue in a too simple arithmetical formula of unity. A true formula comprehending the universe is bound to be far more complicated than even that of Einstein. The great problem of religion is to formulate a Monotheism which is consistent with the inextricable complications and perpetual conflicts of Good and Evil. Hence Zoroaster began

his religious thesis by emphasizing the great conflict of Good and Evil on the moral, spiritual and physical planes. Need I point out that the method of approach of much of the present-day Philosophy is on his lines? Need I refer to the position taken up by James Mill and William James, by Dr. MacTaggart and Dean Rashdall? Nor was Zoroaster the only Iranian thinker who anticipated modern philosophical speculation in that direction. The same course was followed by the leading exponents of Manichaeism and Mithraism.

Then again, a great religion must take account of and bring into consistency the aims of personal salvation and the duty of contributing to the world's progress. To achieve this, however, the system must assume a broad idea of religious values. It was the merit of Zoroaster to anticipate the modern idea of progress in its widest sense as applied to the world as a whole, and to define our ideal of duty in relation to it. The ideal of duty preached in the *Gāthās* is summed up in the word "*Frashokereta*" (advancement of the world). The *Saoshyants* (prophets present and to come) are pre-eminently workers in the cause of that progress. To the contemplative life is given its due, but not more than that due; and as to both contemplation and strenuous action the example and ideal was furnished by Zoroaster himself who not only was a great thinker but also devoted much of his time to mundane matters like opposition to Nomads, as well as to the care of cattle. Not in vain has he been acclaimed by Western thinkers as a great hero of Sociology. Life is meant to be strenuous and vigorous, entire ascetic withdrawal being quite out of the question. Zoroaster would subscribe whole-heartedly to the aspiration expressed in the words, "Thy Kingdom come"; only he would supplement it by adding the phrase "here and now." He would also agree to the text, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." Only he would add that the Kingdom of Heaven should also be without you in the shape of the civilization and material progress of the world. It is the high privilege of man to co-operate with the Divine in the great task of the progress of the world in both its spiritual and material aspects.

Another merit of Zoroaster is that he does not confuse the

domains of Religion and Science, with the result that men of science have had no criticism to advance against his system. Zoroaster mentions various striking natural phenomena in his *Gāthās*, but he does not dogmatize on them, utilizing them merely as starting points for the contemplation of the Divine. That doctrine of Polarity which is taught by Zoroaster and his successors has received wide application and exemplification in the hands of the scientists of our day. The sympathies of the students of natural science have therefore been enlisted notably on the side of Zoroastrianism as is shown by numerous dicta. This forms a glorious chapter in the annals of the relation of Religion and Science ; and Zoroastrianism does not figure at all in what has been called the history of the conflict between Religion and Science.

The ideal of world progress (*Frashokereta*) had for its corollary the ideal of world-peace, an ideal of which the value was never more obvious than in the world of today. It is remarkable that in various *Yashtas* prayers are offered not merely for the prosperity of Persia but for that of all Aryan lands—a limitation due only to the limited geographical knowledge of the day. For in the *Farvardin Yashta* homage is offered to the holy ones of many other countries as well. The *Din Yashta* goes further and holds up for acceptance the ideal of general peace. Thus in this aspect also the gospel of Zoroaster might well appeal strongly to the present age of science of which the great need is the realization of the ideals of universal peace and the brotherhood of man.

I claim it as a great merit of Zoroastrianism that it was never a propagandist religion in the modern sense of the word. We have accounts of the Zoroastrian polity in its Augustan age under the Achaemenians. Although by no means wholly friendly narrators, they never assert that the Iranian Kings attempted to spread their faith by political or other means. Rather there was perfect toleration for all. The old Iranians knew that in real truth there can be no opposition between religions but only co-operation. As a Zoroastrian I would not, even if I could, shake your faith in your own religions in the slightest degree. Yet Zoroastrianism can, as an ancient, simple and undogmatic state-

ment of spiritual truth, serve as an introduction or supplement to other religions. My highest aspiration, accordingly, is that some of you at least might supplement and deepen your study of the Bible or the Gītā, of the Dhammapada or the Koran by devoting a few moments to the message of Zoroaster.

THE SUFI MOVEMENT IN EUROPE

PROF. MRS. GISELLA MUNIRA CRAIG

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THE FOUNDER AND THE MOVEMENT

Hazrat Inayat was born in Baroda on the fifth day of July of the year 1882 in a long line of musicians, sages and saints. His mother Khatigia Bibi, daughter of a princess of royal blood, had wonderful dreams during the period preceding Inayat's birth. She dreamed of receiving special blessings from Christ and from the prophet Mohammed, and she saw herself surrounded by saints.

Her father Moula Bux a famous musician of the highest spirituality, had a great influence on the mystical soul of his grandchild. He used to take the little one to visit the *gurus* and the sages, who attracted Inayat by their spiritual conversations.

The religion of the boy and of his family was the Mohammedan, but his mother, during the period preceding his birth, had given praise to Christ, to Moses and to Mohammed.

Religion and poetry were the favourite subjects of the boy ; and while still young, he wrote a dialogue in allegorical form between Faith and Will. Once he was asked, "Are there not enough songs in the world, that you want to write others?" "No," he answered, "there are not enough, or else God would not have created me."

He had a great talent for music and very soon he began to write sacred songs. He used to play his *vinā* to the old sages, to the dervishes and fakirs, who were greatly attracted to him.

On every occasion the boy showed a great respect for every belief and was always ready to protect Christian missionaries who preached in India. To those who opposed them, he used to say: "Leave them alone, they preach their belief." Once he saw some Mohammedan boys playing irreverently with Hindu idols and he objected to this. "What does it matter?" they said, "they are not our Gods." "But they are someone else's Gods," he replied.

One evening, prostrated on the roof of his home, imploring Allah, Inayat felt that he had not received a real revelation from God and that he could not possibly pray any more to an unknown God.

Then he began to study all the religions, not with a critical spirit, but as an admirer of Truth in all its different forms. He read reverently the lives of the founders of religions, realizing the unique truth that was hidden in each of them, and the One Source of Inspiration of the Messengers of every age and of every people.

When Moula Bux died, Inayat grieved over the loss of his musical guide and inspirer. He wished to continue the tradition of his grandfather, by trying to bring the sacred music of India to its primitive glory and to direct it to the most noble aims. He was eighteen years of age when he left Baroda, where he had given his services to its musical Academy, to undertake a trip across India. He wished to spread his spiritual ideals and to create a universal system of music.

During this time Inayat also studied comparative religions and became more and more interested in Western people.

When on the shores of the Ganges, the young musician heard more than ever the mystical voices of the past. One day, crossing a majestic forest, he felt all the poetry of the big trees, and in their branches he saw arms outstretched to bless in prayer. In fact he recognized in them his own hands stretched out in an attitude of benediction.

Inayat was welcomed at the courts of Rajahs and Maharajahs, and from all the cities of India he received medals in appreciation of his music.

The Nizam of Hyderabad, Mir Maheeb Ali Khan, a great mystic, showed the young musician a special favour. He kept him for a long time at his court, in order to enjoy his composition and his songs which Inayat accompanied with his *vīṇā*.

One day the Nizam asked him what mystery was hidden in his melodies. The young musician replied, "Your Highness, as sound is the highest source of manifestation, it is mysterious within itself and whosoever has the knowledge of sound, he indeed knoweth the secret of the universe. My music is my thought, and my thought is my emotion ; the deeper I dive into the ocean of feeling, the more beautiful are the pearls I bring forth in the form of melodies. Thus my music creates feeling within me even before others feel it. My music is my religion ; therefore worldly success can never be a proper price for it, and my sole object in music is to achieve perfection." On hearing these words the Nizam took from his finger an emerald ring and placed it upon the hand of Inayat.

During one of his trips, he lost all the medals and decorations which he had received in recognition of his musical talent. He felt a great sorrow at the moment, but little by little a revelation from Allah "touched the hidden chords of his mind and opened his eyes to the truth." He knelt down and thanked God for the loss, crying: "Let all be lost from my imperfect vision, but thy true self, ya Allah!"

Then he set forth, more devoted than ever, in pursuit of philosophy, visiting every mystic he could. He travelled through jungles, across mountains and along river banks, in search of hermits, playing and singing before them. In Nepal, during the pilgrimage of Paśupatinātha, he met a *muni*, a *mahātman*, of the Himalayas, who revealed to him the mysticism of sound, unveiling before his sight the inner mystery of music.

When at Ajmeer, he visited the tomb of Khaja Moinuddin Christi, the most celebrated Sufi saint of India. The sacred atmosphere of that place pervaded his soul with peace. Inayat returned home that evening and spent of the entire night in prayer. Before sunrise he heard the voice of a fakir calling to prayer. In that moment he realized the vanity of all earthly matters.

Completely lost in his thoughts, while the faithful were going to the mosques or temples, he turned towards the jungle and arrived at a cemetery where a group of dervishes attracted his attention. They greeted each other saying: "God is love and God is beloved," and they sang the songs of the Sufi Masters, such as Rumi, Jami, Hafiz and Shamstabrez.

Since then, Inayat spent a few hours in silence every day and became familiar with the life of the dervishes.

Once, in a dream, he saw a gathering of prophets, saints and sages wrapped in their yellow Sufi robes and lost in the joy of music. He had also a vision of a radiant spiritual face which increased his interest in mysticism. He asked a friend for an interpretation of both his dream and his vision. His friend, who was a lover of the mystical, answered that the dream was a symbol of his initiation into the Sufi Order of Chisti Khandan, while the vision was the image of his spiritual guide. He also advised him to pass through the initiation of Sufism.

Inayat then visited several *murshids* and after months of continuous searching for a spiritual guide, he called on Moulana Khairulmubeen to whom he confided his desire to embrace Sufism.

While reflecting on this subject, the Moulana received a telepathic message that a great *murshid* was coming to him. In fact, Saiyad Madani arrived soon afterwards, and Inayat recognized in him the face of his vision. Immediately the master initiated him into Sufism, and the sacred link between master and disciple increased Inayat's inspiration.

Before the soul of Saiyad Madani departed from his body, he placed his hands on Inayat's head in blessing and said: "Fare forth into the world, my child, and harmonize the East and the West with the harmony of thy music. Spread the wisdom of Sufism abroad, for to this end art thou gifted by Allah, the most Merciful and Compassionate."

Consequently in the year 1910 Inayat came to the West, giving up all material interests to obey the command he had received from his *murshid*.

He visited America, giving musical and philosophical lectures in various Universities, playing the *viṇā*, and singing in order to communicate through music his spiritual ideals.

When in California, after lecturing at Los Angeles and Berkeley Universities, Inayat founded the Sufi Order, with the objects of establishing a human brotherhood with no consideration of caste, creed, race, nation or religion, spreading the wisdom of the Sufis, which had been until that time a hidden treasure and harmonizing the East and the West in music—the universal language by an exchange of knowledge and a revival of unity.

From America Inayat Khan came to Europe and initiated the Sufi Order in England, France, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Russia, Italy and other lands. During the last years of his life the master gave up his music, that sublime music from which his philosophy was born, to spread his message with his words.

During one of his visits to Rome, I had the privilege of introducing him to many interesting personalities, among whom a writer asked him why he had given up his music. His answer was, "I gave up my music because I had received from it all that I had to receive. To serve God, one must sacrifice the dearest thing, and I sacrificed the dearest thing to me, my music. I had composed songs and played on the *viṇā*; and in practising this music, I touched the music of the spheres of the universe; then every soul became for me a musical note, and all life became a symphony. Inspired by it, I spoke to the people, and those who were attracted by my words listened to them instead of listening to my songs. Now, if I do anything, it is to tune souls instead of instruments, to harmonize people instead of notes. If there is anything in my philosophy, it is the law of harmony—how one must put oneself in harmony with oneself and with others. I have found in every word a certain musical value, a melody in every thought, a harmony in every feeling and I have tried to interpret the same thing with clear and simple words to those who used to listen to my music.

: "I played on the *viṇā* until my heart transformed itself into an

instrument of music, which I offered to the Divine Musician, the only musician existing. Since then I became His flute, and when He chooses, He plays His music on it. The people give me credit for this music which in reality is not due to me, but to the Musician who plays on His own instrument.

"The school of this music, if you like to call it music, as I call it, I have founded in Suresnes, near Paris, where souls from every part of the world are attracted by the music of that flute."

Sureness! Those who have had the privilege of following Hazrat Inayat's teachings in his school, will never forget the wonderful inspiration of his words and the nobility of his countenance. Wrapped in his yellow robe, he would sit under a tree in the garden, that same tree which, in 1927, at the moment of his passing, faded and died. There he was surrounded by the *murshids* who had come from every country to listen to his marvellous teaching.

His words were reverently collected, and now they form a series of books which have been translated from English into many languages. Among these books are *The Gayan* or *Notes of Unstruck Music*, *the Vadan* or *Divine Symphony*, *The Nirtan* or *Dance of the Soul*, *The Mysticism of Sound*, *In an Eastern Rose Garden*, *The Unity of Religious Ideals*, *Inner Life* and many others.

Some of his books I have had the privilege of translating into Italian, and they are greatly appreciated in my own country as well as in the entire world.

The Summer School of Suresnes in connection with the International Sufi Institute is still flourishing under the guidance of Shaikh-ul-Mashaikh Maheboob, his brother, who is assisted by his other brother, Musharaff, and their cousin, Murshid Ali.

This centre, on the banks of the Seine, is a real "oasis" of peace in the busy world of the West. The Universal Worship is held there as in all the other Sufi centres of the world, organized by Pir-O-Murshid Inayat Khan. This is the devotional activity of the Sufi movement, which recognizes Divine Wisdom in the Messengers and Founders of every religion, who brought the light

of their inspiration to humanity in different periods of the world's history.

The basic beliefs of Universal Worship are: the existence of One God, the God of all ; the recognition of all teachers of humanity, who, having guided it towards the Ideal, are the embodiments of the Divine Spirit of Guidance ; and the conviction that humanity needs to be brought to that consciousness of Unity which is the central theme of all religions.

According to these beliefs, the followers of the Universal Worship have regard for all teachers of humanity, respect for all religious scriptures, and do not criticize any existing religion nor antagonize those holding an opposite opinion. The description of this service I will give separately.

The other chief activities of the Sufi Movement are the World Brotherhood and the Esoteric School of the Sufi Order. The Sufi emblem is a winged heart with the Crescent, symbolizing responsiveness and the star representing the Divine spark which is reflected in the human heart ; by virtue of the Divine breath this spark may be blown into a flame illuminating the path of one's life.

The Sufi movement has grown rapidly during recent years, it being an international organization with headquarters in Geneva.

In Italy, as in all the other countries where Hazrat Inayat Khan brought the light of his teaching, his memory will ever be cherished.

It was a lovely evening of our Roman autumn when we heard his words for the first time, when he stretched his hands towards us with his "God bless you." And when we came out from the hall where our souls had recognized him, the Eternal City, lying in all its glory at the foot of the Pincian hill, seemed to share with us the joy of the message of Love, Harmony and Beauty ; the sound of the bells of its temples seemed to celebrate the coming of the Master among us. Thirteen years have passed

since, but the music of his first words is still echoing in our souls. He came back to Rome in the joy of the spring, to offer us the precious gift of the Altar of the Universal Worship, the altar around which we still gather united in the greatest devotion to the noble ideals of our Master.

At the end of 1926, knowing that his mission had been fulfilled, Pir-O-Murshid Inayat Khan obeyed the Call of Return and went back to his native land. There, after giving a series of lectures in the Delhi University, and after having been recognized as a great master and founder of the Sufi Order of the West, he retired to a little cottage near the banks of the Jumna.

There, after having passed some days in the state of *samādhī*, his soul parted from his physical body on the fifth day of February, 1927.

Four years ago I had the great privilege of visiting his *durgah* at Nizamuddin's cemetery. In the silence of the holy shrine it seemed to me that I heard once again, still more sublime, the notes of his *vīṇā* and his inspired words. Enchanted, I seemed to see arise on the tomb his altar, the altar of that Universal Worship he had created.

While in India you are closing the festivities of the Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna who saw in every faith a path to God, I am thinking how our *Murshid* would rejoice in this Parliament of Religions to be held in his native land. I know that his spirit will be with you in this gathering, for it is in perfect accord with his ideal of harmonizing the followers of every faith.

And may the united efforts of all the faiths and religions of the world, brought together in this Parliament, be blessed "to the furtherance of national amity, international fellowship and universal peace!"

A DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OF UNIVERSAL WORSHIP

Upon the altar, covered with yellow cloth, are eight candles. The large central one, higher than the others and already burning before the congregation enters, represents the Divine Light, from which all others are derived, the Light of God.

The second large candle, standing immediately below the first, symbolizes the Spirit of Guidance, the Messenger in all ages who, known or unknown to the world, has held aloft the Light of Truth through the darkness of human ignorance.

The other six candles represent the chief religions of the world ; the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Zoroastrian, the Hebrew, the Christian and the Islamic.

The Scriptures belonging to these Religions lie at the foot of the six candles.

The service is performed by the *cherags* and *cheragas* who have been ordained. One of them, lighting the taper from the higher candle representing the Divine Light, lights the seven candles. Then the *cherag* says the prayer, "*Saum*."

Saum

Praise be to Thee, Most Supreme God,
Omnipotent, Omnipresent, All-pervading,
The Only Being.
Take us in Thy paternal arms,
Raise us from the denseness of the earth.
Thy Beauty do we worship,
To Thee do we give willing surrender,
Most Merciful and Compassionate God,
The Idealized Lord of the whole humanity.
Thee only do we worship ; and towards Thee alone we aspire.
Open our hearts toward Thy Beauty,
Illuminate our souls with Divine Light,
O Thou, the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty!
All-powerful Creator, Sustainer, Judge and Forgiver of our
shortcomings,
Lord God of the East and of the West, of the worlds above
and below,
And of the seen and unseen Beings,
Pour upon us Thy Love and Thy Light,
Give sustenance to our bodies, hearts and souls,
Use us for the purpose that Thy Wisdom chooseth,
And guide us on the path of Thine Own Goodness ;

Draw us closer to Thee every moment of our life ;
Until in us be reflected Thy Grace, Thy Glory, Thy Wisdom,
Thy Joy and Thy Peace.

AMEN

A second *cherag* reads the different scriptures. After this, the prayer "*Salat* " is repeated.

Salat

Most gracious Lord, Master, Messiah and Saviour of
Humanity,

We greet Thee with all humility.

Thou art the First Cause and the Last Effect, the Divine
Light and the Spirit of Guidance, Alpha and Omega.

Thy Light is in all forms, Thy Love in all beings ; in a
loving mother, in a kind father, in an innocent child,
in a helpful friend, in an inspiring teacher.

Allow us to recognize Thee in all Thy Holy names and
forms, as Rāma, as Krishna, as Siva, as Buddha.

Let us know Thee as Abraham, as Solomon, as Zarathushtra,
as Moses, as Jesus, as Mohammed, and in many other
names and forms, known and unknown to the world.

We adore Thy Past ; Thy Presence deeply enlightens our
being, and we look for Thy blessing in the future.

O Messenger, Christ, Nabi, the Rasoul of God ! Thou whose
heart constantly reaches upward, Thou comest on earth
with a message as a dove from above when *dharma*
decayeth, and speakest the Word that is put into Thy
mouth, as the light filleth the crescent moon.

Let the Star of the Divine Light shining in Thy Heart be
reflected in the hearts of Thy devotees,

May the Message of God reach far and wide, illuminating
and making the whole Humanity as one single Brother-
hood in the Fatherhood of God.

AMEN

A third *cherag* gives a sermon or reads a religious *gatheka* of our Master. Then he says the prayer "*Khatum*."

· *Khatum*

O Thou, who art the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty,

The Lord of Heaven and Earth, open our hearts, that we may hear Thy Voice, which constantly cometh from within ;

Disclose to us The Divine Light, which is hidden in our souls, that we may know and understand life better ;

Most Merciful and Compassionate God, give us Thy great Goodness ;

Teach us Thy loving forgiveness, .

Raise us above the distinctions and differences which divide men ;

Send us the peace of Thy Divine Spirit, .

And unite us all in Thy Perfect Being.

AMEN

At the close of the service the blessing is given to the Congregation by the third *cherag*.

SOME ASPECTS OF BENGAL VAISHNAVISM

PROF. B. V. DASGUPTA

Dacca, Bengal

Just four hundred and forty-two years ago on a full-moon day was Lord Gaurāṅga born in the holy city of Navadvip on the sacred bank of the Ganges.

He was full of infinite love, infinite wisdom, infinite beauty and infinite grace.

He was the embodiment of the quintessence of Love or *prema*—Rādhā and Kṛishṇa blended into one. He was Kṛishṇa

assuming the nature and qualities of Rādhā to taste and enjoy his own infinite sweetness.

The current of his love flowed in two directions, one towards Kṛishṇa, the Infinite, and the other towards beings, both animate and inanimate. The poor and the depressed, the sinner and the afflicted, and the lepers—both physical and moral—became easy recipients of his infinite love and grace. He threw open the gates of the highest heavens to those against whom they had been shut from time immemorial, and brought the message of love to the doors of such people.

The Bengal School of Vaishṇavism owes its origin and development to this Incarnation of Love, whom our most honoured guest, Sir Francis Younghusband, calls the sweet Prophet of Nadia.

His message was that of *prema* and *bhakti*. *Prema* is the ultimate goal, and *bhakti* is the means to attain that goal. There is no denying the fact that the current of *bhakti* came from Southern India, but it again flowed back from Bengal in a richer and mightier stream and spread throughout the length and breadth of India in that medieval age. The revered Swami Vivekananda said:

“Bengal Vaishṇavas are not aware how Mahāprabhu Śrī Gaurāṅga’s influence is working in other provinces of India. Wherever a drop of real *bhakti* can be seen, it is to be undoubtedly understood that it is nothing but a drop of grace that emanated from the Love-roars of the Lion of Nadia—Śrī Gaurāṅga.”

Dr. Cousins said:

“All movements relating to this Universal *Avatāra* were local, but time would come in no distant future when the movements would shake the world, and thoughts should go forth with powers which should sleep no more.”

The late Mr. Stead said:

“Such a beautiful and universal religion has never yet been preached in the world. How I wish that the *Life and Character* of Śrī Chaitanya be read in every Church of Europe.”

The ultimate spiritual goal of the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava Religion is not liberation, but Love—a living Love for the Deity Who, in the perennial freshness of prime of youth, is split into Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa—the Eternal Man and the Eternal Woman—for the sake of Love. Kṛṣṇa is Supernatural Eros of Spiritual Vṛindāvana, the Realm of Love, and Rādhā is His Female Counterpart.

The fourfold object of pursuit, viz. virtue, wealth, desire and liberation, is discarded in Vaiṣṇavism, and the soul is centred in Love which constitutes the fifth object of pursuit.

Śrī Chaitanya came not as an avenger to condemn the sinner with eternal damnation. He came to redeem the world by living Love. The fallen, the sinning and the outcast were filled with a radiant hope. Instead of the burning fire of hell, they found repose in the sweet bosom of the Deity, their Eternal Lover. He washed their sins with His tears that streamed out of His love-filled eyes.

RELIGION OF MAN

Bengal Vaiṣṇavism is essentially the Religion of Man. The Eternal is the Supreme Image of the Deity.

Śrī Chaitanya-Charitāmṛta says:—

“ Of all Kṛṣṇa's sports of love,

The most excellent are His Love-Sports as Man ;

The Human body is the Supreme Form of the Deity.”

It adds that there are numerous emanations and hypostases of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Eternal Man. Nārāyaṇa, who represents His power and splendour, and the great divinities to whom is relegated the charge of creation, preservation and destruction—all owe their life and being to the Eternal Man. He does not directly participate in these activities.

This human aspect of the Deity is hinted at in the Bible and other ancient books. The Sufis and the Christian mystics had occasional glimpses of this truth.

“ God made man after His own image ”, says the Bible. Does not this imply that if the Deity has any form, it must be

human? In Jewish *Cabala* too, the human form of the Deity is implied. Indeed no form of the Deity, other than human, can have any appeal for man.

Of all the forms of God, the one having the highest aesthetic appeal for man must be the human form. Whenever an arid divine abstraction or a deity of a fearful mien with school-masterly frown, has been in evidence in any religion, men with profound religious feelings have sought in mysticism a humane and human deity to satisfy the deep yearnings of the soul.

Now, of all the human forms of the Deity, the one in the prime of youth must have the most powerful aesthetic and religious appeal. It is because of this that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Human Form of the Deity. Psychologically and aesthetically, there cannot be any other that can approach Him.

Even Nietzsche's heart ached and thirsted for a Deity like Kṛṣṇa—the Ever-youthful Dancing God of Love, when he exclaimed:—

“ I should only believe in a God
That would know how to dance.”

(Thus Spake Zarathushtra).

VAISHNAVA MYSTICISM

Mystics in all times and climes have flashes of the truth that the ultimate reality is Love, and our earthly love is but a pale, counterfeit reflection of that Love. Some of them have glimpsed the Deity as Spouse or Divine Lover. But as this immediate awareness of God as Lover was vouchsafed to them in rare moments of exaltation, the rapture of the communion with the Eternal Lover was eclipsed by fear, doubt and bewilderment.

The Chaitanya-Charitāmṛita says:

Sri Kṛṣṇa pondered thus on the eve of His descent on earth:
“ All the world is tainted with the sense of power of the Deity who is Love. I cannot relish a love that has been disintegrated by the sense of power. The devotee who looks upon Me as the Lord and upon himself as an inferior being cannot enthrall Me

who am enthralled by Love and Love alone. Mother (Yaśodā) binds Me as she is always aware that I am her little darling. Inspired by the sentiments of pure friendship My friends climb on to My shoulders and say, 'Surely you are not a great one. You and we are equals.' The maidens, who love Me most dearly, chide me in their sulks. Their reproaches fascinate Me more than the hymns of the Vedas."

This complete freedom from fear and the feeling of extreme *own-ness* engendered by it are what chiefly distinguish Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava mysticism from other forms of mysticism.

This sense of 'own-ness' makes the devotees of different classes regard Kṛiṣṇa as being infinitely dearer than earthly friends, sons and lovers.

Indeed every earthly love, however strong it may be, is but a faint and sickly reflection of that living and eternal love that the devotees of different classes—friends, mothers or beloved—cherish in their real selves in Spiritual Vṛindāvana, for the Supreme Lover Kṛiṣṇa.

Spiritual Vṛindāvana is realized in the devotee's contemplation as his or her real and eternal home. And as this realization deepens, the earthly attractions diminish by degrees until they appear as shadows and lose all their charms and attractiveness. Then a *new* light breaks out from all things and the world is revealed to the devotee as the Realm of Love lighted by the living Presence of Kṛiṣṇa.

Thākura Narottama, the prince-saint of Khetur, thus sings of the Blessed Realm of Love—

"O tonight the relishful essence of holy love raineth ceaseless showers upon Vṛindāvana. The dwellers of Vṛindāvana are floating in love. The Cloud Syāma raineth the rain of love in torrents. In his lap, Rādhā flashes forth like a streak of living lightning. The roads are slippery with love; one has to walk with unsteady steps. The land has become miry with musk, sandal-paste and saffron. Lo, there spreads the sweet ocean of love: one cannot find one's bearings. Narottama is diving down, for he knows not how to swim."

It is not possible for me to deal with the mystic love of Rādhā, as perfectly manifested in Śrī Chaitanya, but the following description from the *Chaitanya-Charitāmṛita* will give you some idea of the wonderful physical manifestations resulting from the ecstatic exaltation of His love for Kṛishṇa:—

“The Lord was lying on the ground with His body elongated five or six cubits. He lay senseless and His breathing was completely stopped. All the joints of His hands, feet, neck and waist came out about half or a quarter of a yard apart. . . . He was foaming at the mouth. . . . Soon after, He came to Himself and in a flash His detached joints again came together and His body once more regained its natural state.

“ . . . At first the Lord ran on, fleet as a gale ; but soon, He stopped and stood rigid. At each hair-pore of His appeared a swelling like a boil and the hair stood on end like the stigmas of the *kadamba* flower (*nuclea kadamba*). From every hair-pore, sweat mixed with blood streamed forth. A gurgling sound came from His throat and His eyes were swimming in tears. It is as if the holy streams of the Ganges and the Jumna were uniting their waters. His whole body became white like a conch-shell and was quaking like a surging sea.”

SUPERNATURAL EROS

The Supreme Personality has been realized, though very rarely, by saints and sages of the hoary past as *Supernatural Eros*. We find the germs of this idea in the Upanishads. In the *Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad* (III. ix. 1) the seer says, “ Love is His (Supreme Person's) Body.”

Now, according to the Vaishṇavic theory, the Supreme Person's body is spiritual. In Him, there is no distinction of body and soul. His body is His soul ; and soul, body. This truth has been elaborated in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and the *Brahma Saṁhitā* both held in high authority by the Vaishṇavas of Bengal.

According to the *Bhāgavata*, Kṛishṇa is the Heart-ravisher of Eros. The *Brahma Saṁhitā* describes Him as the Living

Image of Erotic Sentiment. Jayadeva, a twelfth-century Bengali poet, the author of the *Gita-Govinda*, describes Kṛishṇa as the Embodiment of Transcendental Erotic Sentiment.

Indian Poetics assigns blue colour to the erotic sentiment. This explains why Kṛishṇa's complexion is blue, which has been compared to a new cloud or a fresh-blown blue lotus.

During his discourse on Divine Love as narrated in the *Chaitanya-Charitāmṛita* (Madhya VIII) Rāmānanda says to Śrī Chaitanya :

" Kṛishṇa is the Supernatural Eros of Vṛindāvana who is worshipped by the seed-word and mystic syllables of Eros."

RADHA AND KRISHNA

THE ETERNALLY FEMININE AND ETERNALLY MASCULINE

Kṛishṇa, the Supernatural Eros of Vṛindāvana, is the highest form of God-hood, according to the Bengal School of Vaishṇavism. In spiritual Vṛindāvana, Kṛishṇa is engaged in love-sports with Rādhā and Her confidantes. Kṛishṇa is the very Image of Being, Spirit and Bliss. Every part of His beatific body is capable of performing the functions of all the senses. His eyes not only see but also hear, smell, think and feel. The same is the case with all other parts of His body. Baladeva Vidyā-bhushaṇa says in the *Govinda-Bhāshya* :

" All the qualities of Kṛishṇa may be meditated on in every part of his body: for, the Vedas say that He has hands, feet and eyes everywhere."

The *Purāṇas* add that every part of Kṛishṇa's body may perform the functions of all the senses of perception and organs of action. It is said that all the parts of Kṛishṇa's body can look upon, sustain and dissolve the worlds.

Then, again, Kṛishṇa is Beauty Itself. A particle of His Beauty may flood the universe. The Vaishṇavas also may say with Rabaia that He is "Everlasting Beauty." Again, there is one inherent power of Kṛishṇa's sweetness that it perturbs all men and women, birds, beasts and even trees and rocks. It

perturbs even Kṛishṇa Himself. His Transcendent Beauty enraptures Himself and He longs to embrace Himself.

Kṛishṇa is the centre of all attractions. He attracts all beings towards Himself with His irresistible attraction.

Rādhā is the Feminine Counterpart of Kṛishṇa. She is the quintessence of Kṛishṇa's Exhilarating Energy. Energy, according to Vaishṇava Philosophy, exists in two forms—formless and with form. Energy, as image, is like the images of tunes which are both with form and without form. In the archetypal or ideal world, ideas have eternal forms.

The heart-ravishing beauty of Rādhā attracts even Kṛishṇa, who attracts all beings. Her body, Her dress, Her excellences, Her unguents, Her adornments are all made of love-stuff.

MESSAGE OF VAISHNAVISM

It has not been possible for me to give you even the barest outline of the Bengal School of Vaishṇavism. Every one of the topics dealt with needs a volume by itself. I shall put in a nutshell the pith of the matter.

Vaishṇavism teaches that all mankind, not only mankind, but all beings, cosmic and super-cosmic, are united in an infinite federation of love. Rādhā and Kṛishṇa—the Eternal Man and the Eternal Woman—form the life and being of all. To render loving service to Them in Spiritual Vṛindāvana—the ultimate Realm of Love which pervades all—is the law of one's life. The Vaishṇava's daily intimate prayer is that the eternal *Love-bodies* of all cosmic and super-cosmic beings may be revealed, so that they may consciously participate in rendering loving service to Rādhā and Kṛishṇa.

To such a Vaishṇava who lives to the height, depth and breadth of his being, all—men, birds, beasts, trees, flowers—become eternal love-companions: and this dull, drab world becomes iridescent with the flashes of Rādhā-Kṛishṇa and Their eternal love-games.

As one thinks, so does one become. So, Vaishṇavic *sādhana*, if performed in the proper spirit, will create a new earth and a

new heaven, and flood the universe with love ; and all the ills of world-strife—hate, distrust, war—will vanish, as darkness fades away at the approach of dawn. Then all beings from the radiant gods down to the minutest particles of dust in their rapture-bodies, shall be realized as forming one infinitely vast congregation, adoring Kṛishṇa—the Loving Image of Everlasting Joy—through loving service.

Some of the greatest thinkers and seers of the West have accepted Divine Love as the ultimate reality. The time is not far off when the whole world will be drifting towards that ideal. Theresa says: "A pure love is indeed the panacea for all the ills of the world. The realm of love is the realm of eternal verities. All things in it are but diverse modifications of Love, profoundly deep, profoundly real and profoundly simple."

HINDUISM

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I have been commissioned to achieve the impossible—to thread an elephant through the eye of a needle. My task is no less than to give you an exposition, within thirty minutes, of such an obscure and oceanic subject as Hinduism which is *Samudra iva gāmbhīrye* (deep as the ocean) and is the repository of 'full many a gem of purest ~~may~~ serene'—of Hinduism, mis-named so in these later days by the invading hosts who found their passage eastward barred by the mighty Sindhu which they mispronounced 'Hindu.' Well, let me do the best.

In one of the older Upanishads, the Rishi-teacher speaks of the higher and the lower 'wisdom'—*Dve vidye veditavye parā cha aparā cha*—the lower wisdom being all the philosophies, sciences and arts, not excepting the Vedas. What then is the *Parā-vidyā*?—It is the Divine Wisdom (Knowledge of God)—*Brahma-vidyā*, the true Sophia, *Srutiśīrah*, rightly called Vedānta,

the crown and consummation of the Vedas—which is enshrined in the Upanishads:

*Yenāksharam Purusham Veda Satyam,
Provācha tasmai tattvato Brahmadevyām*

It is the root-base of all the philosophies, sciences and arts—*Sarvavidyā-pratishthā*.

From the view-point of this *Parā-vidyā*, God is “*Ekamevādvitīyam*”—One without a second. He is a Unity but also a *Uniquity*, so that not only is there no God *but* God (*Eka eva Maheśvaraḥ*), but God is all in all—*Yasmāt param nāparamasti kiñchit*. Hence the Vedāntic proclamation, clear, concise and unequivocal is *Sarvam khalvidam Brahma* (All this is indeed Brahman). But can this be maintained in the face of the manifold universe, which hits our senses—either external or internal—every moment of time? Manifestly there is multiplicity, yet Vedāntic Monism assures us, *neha nānāsti kiñchana* (“Nowhere is there multiplicity whatsoever.”)

In the Upanishads, this problem of non-duality is tackled in a twofold way, viz. (i) by asserting that multiplicity, *dvaita* (duality) is only *māyā*, and (ii) by demonstrating that the external world with its manifoldness, on careful analysis, turns out to be a mere mode of manifestation of the Absolute. With the accent of pure Monism, the Vedānta says, “the world exists as it were”—*Yatra hi dvaitamiva bhavati*. It is mere illusion or appearance *Māyāmātram tu*—that is to say, the *esse* of the Universe is its *percipi*. *Pratītmātramevāitad bhāti viśvam charācharam*. This is finely illustrated in a famous passage in the *Chhāndogya*: *Yathā soumya! ckena mṛtipiṇḍena sarvam mṛinmayam viññātam syāt vācharambhaṇam vikāro nāmadheyam mṛittiketyeva satyam*. (“If, my dear, you know a lump of clay, you verily know all clay-made things, so verily it is with the Universe—the underlying substance of it all being the Absolute.”) As the rope appears to you as the snake, the mother of pearl as silver and the solar rays as flowing water, so the Brahman *appears* as the multiple universe of *nāma rūpa*—of names and forms—

*Aho, vikalpitaṁ viśvam ajñānāt mayi vartate,
Raupyam śuktau phaṇirajau vāri śūryyakare yathā*

The alternative exposition is that of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* (Qualified-Monism). Thus the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* says—*Sa yathā dundubher-hanyamānasya na bāhyān śabdān śaknuyāt grahaṇāya, dundubhestu grahaṇena dundubhyāghātasya vā śabdo grihitah* ("Just as the notes of a musical instrument—drum, conch or lyre,—can be seized only when the instrument is seized, so the World of plurality can be known only when Brahman, whose emanation it is, is known.") We know that in these modern days, science, in the ultimate analysis, has reduced the diversity of the Universe into the great duality of matter and energy—the same, on a lower plane, as the ancient Sāṅkhya spoke of as *Prakṛiti* and *Puruṣa* and the Upanishads as *Rayi* and *Prāṇa*. The Vedānta, going one step further, resolves these two ultimates into a supreme Unity, regarding matter and energy as the two poles of Being, as the *Parā Prakṛiti* and the *Aparā Prakṛiti* of Brahman—His two modes of manifestation, His *Vidhā* or *Prakāra*—

Apāreya mitastvanyām prakṛitim viddhi me parām.

We are also told that when the "One without a second" desired to manifest,—*Eko'ham bahusyām*—His *Prakṛiti* bifurcated into *chit* and *jaḍa*; into matter and energy, which, when the hour strikes for the dissolution of the Universe, are once again resumed into the Unity from which they had emanated—

*Prakṛitir yā mayākhyāta vyaktāvyaakta svarūpiṇi
Puruṣaśchāpyubhau etau liyete Paramātmāni*

(*Vishṇupurāṇa*. VI. iv. 38)

So the Vedānta speaks of Brahman or the Absolute as *Pradhāna-puruṣeśvaraḥ*—the one and only Reality of whom matter and energy are but modes of manifestation.

What is the nature of this Absolute? According to the Vedānta, He is both a Principle and a Person—both *Nirviśeṣa* and *Saviśeṣa*, both *Nirguṇa* and *Saguna* at the same time—both a Transcendence and an Immanence (*Bahirantaścha bhūtānām*), at once static and dynamic, far yet near (*Dūrāt sudūre tadīhāntike cha*), above life and in it, all Love yet all Law, eternal in essence though working in time, vaster than the vastest, yet tinier than the

tinest (*Aṇoraṇīyān mahato mahīyān*),—in a word He is the supreme Unity of all contradictions. He is a being “who, closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet,” reveals Himself to the intuition of man as a wondrous Personality. . . . Beyond all personality—yet a Person of persons.

As a person He is *Sat, Chit* and *Ānanda*—Life, Light, and Love—“the glorious Trinity of Power, Wisdom and Bliss”—*Pratāpa, Prajña* and *Prema*—a Trinity in Unity.

So far about the Absolute, the *Paramātman*, the Universal Self. What about the individual self, the *jīvātman*? The *jīvātman*, according to the Vedānta, is a Divine fragment—“*Mamaivāṁśa*” as the *Gītā* phrases it—a spark of the Eternal Flame, a wavelet of the boundless Ocean of Life. Being made in the image of God, the *jīva*, as we may expect, is also *Sat-Chit-Ānanda* in his essence and has potentially all the Divine powers and potencies. We men are verily the sons of God (Lodge), the heirs of immortality—*amṛitasya putrah*—though for the moment wearing perhaps a beggar’s disguise. Each one is God in the making, a logos in gestation and one day, having evolved the latent potentialities of Power, Wisdom and Love, he, a God in the becoming, will actually become God.

Note, that like Brahman, the *jīva* is both a transcendence and an immanence. As Prof. Deussen, echoing the Vedānta, points out—“Brahman is not in part only but undivided and completely and as a whole, present in that which I, with true insight, find within me as my own self.” As transcendence then, as the Monad, my *Pratyag-ātman*, my metaphysical “I” ‘persists in untarnished purity, through all aberrations of human nature—eternal, blessed’ (Deussen).

As regards the *jīva* as immanence, the whole aim of what we call evolution, is to enable him to unfold the latent germ of divinity within him, so as to realize himself as the transcendence.

From this point of view, the Vedānta speaks of the *jīva* as a tiny seed sown in the womb of nature (*Mamayonirmahad Brahma*) —“sown in weakness in order to be raised to power.” As the seed has, infolded in itself, all the potentialities of the mighty tree,

to be unfolded in the process of growth, so it is with the *Chitatom* called the *jīva*.

It is interesting to note that in an old Hindu book, the stages of evolution are indicated fairly fully. There we are told of two million births of the *jīva* successively in the mineral kingdom, followed by 900,000 in the vegetable, the same number in the reptilia, one million as birds, three millions as beasts, 400,000 as monkeys, until at last the human kingdom is reached. As an American poet, speaking of the progression of the evolutionary current, has finally said—

“ It slept in the jewel,
It leapt in the wave,
It roamed in the forest,
It rose in the grave.”

Repeated re-incarnation, then, is the law of growth for the individual.

So far, man apparently is the crest wave of evolution. He is, in the words of Hamlet,

“ the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals.”

So the Psalmist apostrophizes: “ We are fearfully and wonderfully made ” and the Upanishad speaks of him as *sukṛitam* (well-done).

Having reached the human stage, the *jīva* has to mount up slowly and painfully the rungs of the evolutionary ladder. Emerging from the savage condition, he first becomes semi-civilized and then civilized. The majority of men at the present day are in this “ civilized ” stage, but most of them are “ still immature, ugly like an embryo, unfinished, incomplete, imperfect ” (Lodge), that is to say, they are yet treading the *pravṛitti mārga* (path of forthgoing) and still grow by *ādāna*—by grasping, by appropriation.

They have next definitely to turn the corner and enter the *nivṛitti mārga* (the path of return) where the law of growth is *pradāna*, giving, expropriation. It is apparent that men and women occupy different stairs and stand on different rungs of the evolutionary ladder and so differ from one another in capacity.

This is the foundation of what in Hinduism we speak of as *adhikāri bheda*. Therefore, the law for their growth is not uniform and what it meat for men may be poison for babes. "Be your age" is the golden rule at each stage.

So the Vedānta has tolerance for every opinion and practice—whether it be the fetishism of the savage, the idolatry of the semi-civilized, the church-going of the civilized or the contemplation of the "uncovered Light" by the highly civilized. Thus the Vedānta says—*Yata mata tata patha* and speaks of diverse and devious ways of approach to God—*ṛijukuṭilapatha jushām* and regards "the many faiths as all one holy Church."

When a man has, in the fullness of time, entered the *nivṛitti mārga*, he has by and by to leave the level valley and scale the steep mountain-path—from the normal he has now to pass to supernormal evolution. He has first to become an Initiate, then an Adept—a *Rishi* and by and by a *Maharshi* and finally a *Paramarshi*. In a word, he has to contrive "to be born again, born from above." The technical name in India for the twice-born man is *Brāhmaṇa*—he who knows *Brahman*, whom the Buddha speaks of as the "Knower of the Uncreate." That is the real goal of man—to know God, to be one with Him—*jñātvā devaṁ sarvapāśāpahāniḥ*: So the Sufi, the Vedāntist of Persia, says "Verily unto Him shall I return." For,

'Man who is from God sent forth,
Doth again to God return.'

That is why the Vedānta speaks of God as our Home—our *asta*—*Hitvā avadyam punarastamehi*. And man, "the pilgrim of an inward Odyssey" reaches *home* when he is unified with God. His supreme destiny is only then realized when he is able to say *So'ham*—"I and my Father are one—Anahā Haq—*Brahma san Brahmāpyeti*. This is also the experience of Western mysticism. Says Meister Eckhart—"If I am to know God directly, I must become completely He and He I: so that this He and this I become and are one I." Again, "In this highest stage, the soul is united to God without means; it sinks into the vast darkness of Godhead." (Hinton). But note, that to mount to God is really

to enter into one's self. For "Heaven is within you and whoever shall know *himself*, shall find it." Is not "individual man one with God and of His very nature in essence and existence?"

Friends, be assured, all this is not mere speculation, mere exercise of intellectual ingenuity—what John Milton anathemized as 'vain' philosophy, which

Uncertain and unsettled still remains
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
And trifles for choice matters.

With the great Masters of the Vedānta, it is a matter of realization. With them the Brahman is not a Being enthroned apart on a sapphire seat in a far-off heaven. He, "the first and last, end and limit of all things, incomparable and unchangeable" is seated in the cavity of our own heart—*Guhāhitam gahvareśṭham purāṇam*. Thus, we are verily tabernacles of God and the most High dwelleth in each of us. So the fulfilment of each man's quest is this realization of his essential unity with the Divine Life, by a process of ecstatic beatification through Love or Wisdom,—through *prema* or *jñāna*,—which in this country we know by the technical name of *Yoga*. Therefore, true religion is a matter of direct, immediate, first-hand experience, not by any means a matter of hearsay. He who can merely say: "Thus have I heard," and cannot say, "I know" is, to borrow a legal phrase, out of court. Thus, religion is not a matter for the priest and the *purohita* but for the Prophet and the Paigambar—those who can say with the ancient Rishis: *Vedāham etam Purusham mahāntam*—"Verily, I have known the Divine Effulgence, beyond the depths of darkness and limitation, and the golden veil which, before I was regenerated, hid the face of my Beloved, has now been drawn aside. Thus, have I seen Him face to face, *Tattvam pūshan apāvriṇu Satya-dharmāya drishtaye*—seen my Beloved, who is dearer than offspring, dearer than wealth, dearer than anything—*Preyah Putrāt, preyo vittvāt, preyah anyasmāt sarvāsmāt*. This is the mysticism of the true Saint and Sage, those who are able temperamentally to react to the vision of

Reality—what is called “*Satyasya Satyam*”—the Reality of the Real ” in the *Vedānta*.

Namaḥ Paramaṛishibhyaḥ!

CHINESE BUDDHISM THROUGH INDIAN EYES

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Buddhism as it obtains today in China and Japan is **Mahāyāna** in essence but mixed up with Confucianism or Taoism in China, and Shintoism in Japan. The Chinese, for instance, has adopted the ethical teachings of Confucius and not of the Indian *dharmaśāstras* or *Vinaya piṭaka*, and uses the philosophical expressions and ideas of the Tao texts more than those of the *Abhidharma-piṭaka*. Japan again, has retained its ancient religion of worshipping a hero as a god or a demi-god and so when Buddhism made its way into this land of hero-worshippers, it received Buddha more as a superman and hence worthy of worship as a god and not as a rationalistic philosopher giving a solution to the problems of the world. This being the case, the common folk, in Japan today, finds it difficult to distinguish Buddhism from Shintoism, and instances of people claiming both Shintoism and Buddhism as their religion are countless. But Buddhism has stolen a march over Shintoism by infusing into the hearts of the people the philosophy of *Sūnyatā* or the substancelessness of the things seen around us and the ultimate oneness of the world and *Sūnyatā*. Thus it may be stated that Buddhism in China and Japan may have incorporated the local ethics and beliefs into its code of ethical laws and book of religion but it has kept its philosophy of life or the exposition of the truth untarnished by any of the speculations that might have come into existence before or after its advent. To express in the words of Nāgārjuna, the conception of *Nirvāṇa* or *Sūnyatā* of the Chinese and Japanese even today is that which is

*Anirodhamanutmādamanuchchedamaśāśvatam
Anekārthamanānārthamanāgamam anirgamam*

(*Nirvāṇa* or *Sūnyatā* is that which has no decay and no origin, no termination and no permanency, no singularity and no differentiation, no coming in and no going away.)

THE FOUR MAIN DIVISIONS

Though there are no two opinions among the Buddhists of China and Japan regarding the conception of *Nirvāṇa* or *Sūnyatā*, there are wide divergences of opinion regarding the means to the realization of the same. For this reason a number of sects have come into existence according to the ways of obtaining *Nirvāṇa*. They are:

- (1) The way of Meditation ;
- (2) The way of Faith ;
- (3) The way of *Vinaya* Discipline ; and
- (4) The way of Gradual Spiritual Training.

(1) The *way of meditation* or the school of Ch'an in China and Zen in Japan, corresponding to our *dhyāna* school, was introduced into China by Bodhidharma, a saint of South India, in 520-529 A. D. Bodhidharma is said to have been the twenty-eighth patriarch (Saṅghatthera) of this school counting from Buddha, Aśvaghosha and Nāgārjuna being counted as the twelfth and the fourteenth respectively among the many patriarches who preceded Bodhidharma.

(2) The *way of devotion* very popular in China and specially in Japan called the Amida sect was derived and modified from the Amitābha cult of India. Its introduction into China may be inferred from the date of the earliest Chinese translation made by Anshi-kao (148-170 A. D.) of the *Amitāyus-sūtra* (see Nanjio, col. 10, fn.) which enunciates the cult of Amitābha or Omīto or Amida in Chinese and Japanese.

(3) The *way of Vinaya discipline* or the Lu-tsung of China has no corresponding sect in Japan. It is really an extension of the Indian Vinaya School called Theravāda which sets great store on the observance of the Pātimokkha injunctions and the rules recorded in the *Vinaya piṭaka*, or the *Srāvaka-vinaya* referred

to in the *Sikshā-samuchchaya*, or unrecorded but practised by the monks within and outside the monastery.

(4) The *way of gradual spiritual training* or the Tien-tai School of China corresponding to Tendai and Nichiren sects of Japan is an eclectic one, and teaches that devotion, study, meditation are all indispensable for the attainment of the goal. It, however, lays emphasis on the *Saddharmapūṇḍarikasūtra*, instead of the *Amitāyus-sūtra* of the Amidists and specially on the two methods of teaching adopted by Buddha, viz. imparting the *samvṛti-satya* to the less advanced of his disciples and *paramārtha* to the highly advanced. For devotional exercises it encourages making and painting of images of Buddha and writing of scriptures. The earliest Chinese translation of this *sūtra* is dated in the III Century A. D. and as such we may tentatively regard this date or a little earlier as the probable time of introduction of this cult into China.

The origin and growth of sects in China and specially in Japan are due mainly to the appearance of one or another great teacher, who happened to be fired with the frenzied zeal of giving out what he had experienced in his spiritual life as the only means of realizing the truth. In Japan, the political exigences of the time wielded a great influence on the formation of sects and there are not a few instances of teachers who mixed up religion with national progress ; so we may say that political upheavals were no less responsible for the origin of new sects in Japan. There are various other factors which led to the growth of several sects in China and Japan, with which we do not propose to deal in this paper. The four main divisions in the Buddhist church in China and Japan referred to above were imported from India. The career of these sects in India has not come down to us in any records, but from the existing literature it is evident that the four divergent ways mentioned above for the attainment of *Nirvāṇa* were known and practised in ancient India. Terms like *gantha-dhura*, and *vipassanā-dhura*, *paññā-vimutta* and *saddhā-vimutta*, which we come across in Pāli literature, are definitely suggestive of the four different ways recognized by the ancient Indian Buddhists for the attainment of *Nirvāṇa*, but we are not aware

if these four different ways divided them into four separate sects as we find the case in China and Japan. *Gantha-dhura* (vide *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*, i, p. 7 and iv, p. 37) meant the way for spiritual advancement by studying scriptures. While the *vipassanā-dhura* meant the way for spiritual advancement by constantly meditating in solitary places, keeping in mind the evanescent state of one's existence. These two terms do not appear in the early texts like the Nikāyas but the common expressions in them like the '*Bahussuta*' and '*Dhammadhara*' and '*Ārañṇaka*' and '*Jhāyā*' can well be regarded as the forerunner of the later terms '*ganthadhura*' and '*vipassanādhura*.' The other two terms *paññāvimutta* and *saddhāvimutta* go back to the earliest texts like the *Majjhima Nikāya* (I, pp. 477-79). The former refers to those emancipated by means of knowledge of the teachings imparted by the Teacher while the latter to those emancipated by means of faith in Buddha and his teachings ; in short, one is the usual path of intellect, i.e. insight into the constituents of the world, and the other the path of implicit faith in Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha (for a detailed treatment of which read the *Vatthupamasutta* in the *Majjhima Nikāya*, I). In ancient Buddhism, an adept could take recourse to any one of the four ways for attaining *mukṭi* but that had nothing to do with his sectarian belief as the sectarian divisions rested mainly on doctrinal and disciplinary differences. Our materials at present are too scanty to show a closer connection between the sects existing in China and Japan with their forerunners in India, but we hope further study of Chinese and Japanese texts will throw light on this unexplored region.

TEMPLES

Let us now turn our attention to the temples in China and Japan to ascertain how much of the Indian ideas and beliefs are still left there.

The whole of China is dotted with Buddhist temples, pagodas and monasteries, some of them dating back to the early days when Buddhism was introduced into China. The plan of a Chinese temple is almost the same everywhere in China, except that in a

temple belonging to a particular sect more importance is given to the image and position of the deity or the saint regarded by the sect as its patron. Almost all the big temples consist of three or four halls, placed one behind the other separated by a courtyard or a flight of steps as the case may be, according to the location of the temple on a level ground or on the side of a hill. The sites for temples were selected in China just as it was done in India in places away from human habitation, mostly in the outskirts of a country or on a hill-side, in the forests or where possible, on cliffs overhanging the surging ocean or a torrentuous river, but not so far or perilous as to be inaccessible to the lay public. Every temple provided accommodation not only to the monks dwelling in there but also for those who might happen to visit it in course of their peregrinations, for the monks were and are, as a rule, expected to spend a portion of their time in roaming about, visiting the sacred places. This was enjoined not so much for earning merit as for realizing their state of homelessness.

In every temple around the halls for deities and saints, are dormitories for monks and students, rooms for receiving guest-monks, rooms for meditation to be used by monks either alone or in groups, dining hall, kitchen, rooms for ecclesiastical works, and a few rooms for keeping the images of distinguished saints including Arhats (or Lohans in Chinese).

The temples are made mostly of wood, some with exquisite carvings, gilded in the rich ones, exhibiting even today the enormous sums spent by the faithful devotees. Most of these temples are now very carelessly kept due to the lack of zeal and earnestness both on the part of the monks as well as on that of the lay devotees. In spite of the growing irreligiousness of the people in general, there are in each of these temples one or two monks living a saintly life unaffected by the material interests of the world.

Of the three or four halls composing a monastery the first hall is usually dedicated to Maitreya Bodhisattva,¹ a smiling corpulent figure squatting on the platform "with the left leg crosswise in

¹ In Lung-hwa temple, the principal figure in this hall is that of Bhaishajyaguru instead of Maitreya.

front of the body." "In his right hand he holds a lotus bud or more often a rosary." In the Lung-hwa temple at Shanghai there is one hall exclusively devoted to this image, but in most of the Chinese temples, there are four guardian deities on the two sides of the image. These guardian deities are our Lokapālas entrusted with the care of the four corners of the world. They are:—

(1) Dhṛtarāshṭra o Crhi Kuo presiding over the summer and the east. It is a huge figure in a sitting posture with a mandolin in his hands. The legend is that by music he rectifies the hearts of men: On its head there is a crown, indicating his royalty. The face is amiable and clean-shaved, and has eyes cast upon the earth, suffusing the worldly beings with love and mercy.

(2) Virūpāksha (Kwang-muh), presiding over the winter and the west. It is another huge standing figure, holding a sword to destroy all evil spirits. The face, as can well be imagined, is bearded and has a frowning look with red gaping eyes. It wears a warrior's dress and bears a crown on its head.

(3) Virūḍhaka (Tseng-chang), presiding over the spring and the south. It also wears a crown and is neatly dressed. The face is lovely and is in a happy mood bringing joy to the hearts of men. It carries an umbrella symbolic of the shelter it gives to the beings to protect them from miseries.

(4) Vaiśravaṇa (To-wen), presiding over the autumn and the north. Its face has grinning teeth and red-hot eyes, and strikes awe and terror into the hearts of people. In every movement of its muscles there is a feeling of disgust. It carries a snake to overcome evil.

In the centre of the hall, facing opposite to the images of Maitreya and Bhaishajyaguru there is a gilded figure called Wei-to with eight arms, carrying a sword. It is represented as the Commander-in-chief under the four Lokapālas. It is difficult to find out which Indian god is represented by Wei-to. Probably it represents the Vihārapāla and as such may be identified with Indra or Skanda.

The images in the first hall are of the biggest size in the

whole establishment, but for that reason they do not receive the highest veneration. Incenses are burnt and offerings are made before the image of Maitreya but not with that amount of devotion as is shown to the image of Amitābha or Śākyamuni. Prayers and thanksgiving are not offered to them.

The second hall (the third in Lung-hwa temple) contains five images, the principal of which is that of Śākyamuni placed in the centre. On its two sides are the images of Wen-shu (Mañjuśrī) and Pu-hsien (Samantabhadra). Behind these two images, there are two others, one of Ah-nan (Ānanda) and the other of Chia-seh (Kāśyapa). Along the walls on the two sides equally divided there are images of twenty gods, who are devotees of Buddha and of sixteen Arhats, the images of the Arhats being placed next to those of the gods, i.e. ten gods and eight arhats on each side. These Arhats are supposed to have been entrusted with the care of the Dharma till the advent of Maitreya, so they have postponed their attainment of Nirvāṇa. The chief of these Lohans is Piṇḍola Bharadvāja.

The images of Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra have, in some temples, been replaced by those of Amitābha and Vaidūrya, or Vairocana and Loṣhaṇa.

In place of the central figure, Śākyamuni, there is, in many temples, either the image of Avalokiteśvara or Mahāsthāmaprāpta (Ta-shih-chi) or Kshiti-garbha (Ti-tsang). This change is usually made in accordance with the belief of a particular sect.

In Lung-hwa temple there is a fourth hall which contains three images, the principal of which is that of Amitābha having on its two sides those of Kwan-yin and Mahāsthāmaprāpta.

All around this temple there are living quarters, meditation halls, detailed above, but there is one hall containing images made of clay and straw of 500 Lohans. Among these Lohans, the image of Bodhidharma is given prominence due evidently to the fact that he is the founder of the most popular sect of China, viz. Dhyāna sect. Besides these there is a big pagoda (*stūpa*), towers, a drum and bell towers.

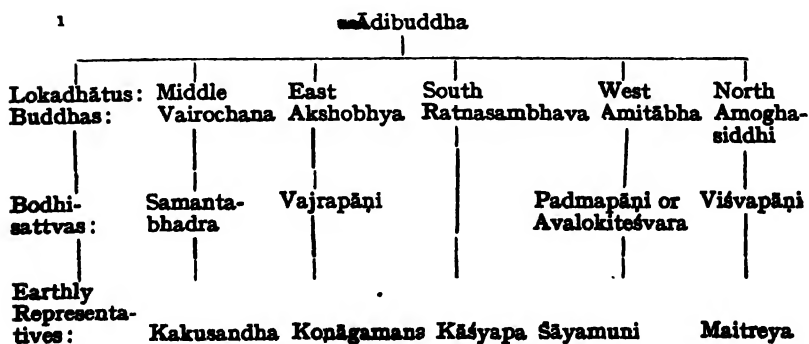
In almost all temples besides a room set apart for the spirit

tablets of abbots, monks and benefactors, there is a stone chamber (p'ie t'ung-t'a) holding in separate cavities the ashes of ordained monks and nuns, *upāsakas* and *upāsikās*. It is constructed of massive stones having on each of its four sides a small hole a few inches square; through these holes are deposited the ashes of the dead, the holes being closed by a movable stone.

BELIEFS

We have seen above that the Chinese worship (1) Buddhas, (2) Bodhisattvas, (3) Saints and (4) Tutelary deities. Among the Buddhas Śākyamuni occupies the most prominent place. He is represented either in the *Dharma*-preaching attitude, or in a meditating posture, and sometimes as an ascetic with shaggy beard and matted hair and sometimes as lying on one side in the Mahāparinirvāṇa posture. In the Mahāyāna pantheon Śākyamuni is not the only Buddha to be worshipped; there are other Buddhas¹ as well, viz. Vairocana Akshobhya, etc. One of these Buddhas is adopted by a particular sect in China as the presiding deity along with his attendant Bodhisattva, but veneration is shown to all other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. In Western China the most popular deity is Amitābha accompanied by Kwan Yin. Next in importance is Mañjuśrī with Samantabhadra, and then Vairocana and Kṣhiti-garbha; in some places Dīpaṅkara Buddha is also worshipped.

Among the 500 Lohans (Arhats), Ananda and Kāśyapa are



prominent. Several Chinese emperors who espoused the cause of Buddhism are also included among the Lohans.

Among the tutelary gods, we have already spoken of the four Lokapālas, Indra or Skanda. To these we may add the images of Chun-ti and Kwan-ti corresponding to Chāṇḍī and Kārttika. Chun-ti¹ or the Holy Mother is represented with eighteen arms with a third eye in the middle of the forehead. Kwanti is described as a brave general of the III cent. A. D. and was deified about the close of the XVI century A. D.

The sanctuaries are covered with cloths of beautiful designs and bright colour. In front of the images, there are wooden platforms for candlesticks, incense burners, dishes for offerings, flowers and artificial fruits.

FORMS OF WORSHIP

Thrice a day the monks assemble and chant hymns. During the offering of prayers or recitation of texts sound is made by an instrument called wooden fish, of which there is plenty in every temple. The monks or devotees kneel down on a padded footstool provided for the purpose and utter their prayers.

The worship of the lay-devotees consists mainly in bowing, and chanting of liturgies, and burning of papers containing some writings. There are many superstitious practices, one of the most popular of which is that a person first prays to the deities for success in his projects and then in order to foresee whether his project would succeed or not, he takes a bunch of numbered wooden sticks and starts shaking them in a round box with one side open until one of the sticks comes out. This stick is taken to the priest who finds out the result by the number inscribed on the stick. Similarly there are a few wooden slabs which are cast on the ground like our tossing of coins to ascertain good and bad luck in any project.

Among other superstitions, we may refer to the practice of tying a thread around a person at the time of death with the image of Amitābha under the belief that the dying man will be

¹ She is a Tāntric goddess, and is sometimes identified with Mārīchi.

carried to heaven, and to the practice of putting dots in printed charts to keep a record of the number of times the name of Amitābha is muttered, corresponding to the counting of beads as practised by the Vaishnavas and the Catholics.

The laity of China are similar to the laity of every other place and religion. They are more concerned with their worldly successes and calamities than with the attainment of *Nirvāṇa*. They visit temples to offer thanksgiving for good luck or to pray for averting calamities or for something good.

MONKS

It is a very peculiar custom in China that a person becomes a monk not by choice. Usually the parents, either in fulfilment of a vow or just believing that a religious life would be good for their son, send their son to the church for living the life of a *śramaṇa*. It is told that there are cases when parents gave away their children for money. From among the elderly monks, foster-fathers are selected. They impart to them religious education and train them up from their boyhood in the duties of a priest of a monastery. At the age of twenty, they are given *pabbajjā*, i.e. formally admitted into the monastic life. This is followed by the ceremony of higher ordination (*upasampadā*). Though this should take place some years after *pabbajjā*, the ceremony is performed only after a week or so. These two ceremonies are well known to us through the Pāli *Vinaya*. There is a third initiation peculiar to Mahāyāna Buddhism and practised in China. It is called the Initiation of a Bodhisattva. This initiation is very painful as it tests the power of endurance and force of will of the monks. The Bodhisattva is expected to undergo all sorts of suffering for doing good to the world and leading all beings to *Nirvāṇa*. He should be prepared to give up his life, not to speak of suffering injuries to his body. As a monk has to take the vow that he would sacrifice his life for the good of the world, he has to prove his earnestness at the time of his consecration by submitting to a number of painful brandings ranging from 2 to 18. On his shaven head are put small cylindrical-shaped burning charcoal pieces stuck on the head by an adhesive substance made from fruits. These pieces

burn into the scalp and leave a black mark. The aspirant in pain utters 'Omīto,' 'Omīto'; sometimes the pain is lessened artificially by pressing the temples.

All monasteries cannot give ordination. They must have the imperial decree for the same. After ordination they can grant certificates which serve as a passport as well as an order to the laity and monastic people to give them food and shelter. When they go about on a tour of pilgrimage, they must have their certificates endorsed by the abbot of monasteries visited by them.

The monks have six appointed hours for devotional exercises viz., early at sun-rise, between 8 and 9 and 11 and 12 in the morning; at 3 p.m., 7 p.m., and 9 p.m. in the evening. These have been contracted into three. The exercises consist of invocations, praises, and recitation of some important chapters from the scriptures. These are sometimes muttered and sometimes chanted in a melody. The chantings are accompanied by the beating of wooden fish, bells, drums, cymbals and tambourines. The offerings consist of rice and tea.

Meditation forms an essential part of their daily life. Those who meditate betake to the Hall of meditation and follow the methods laid down in the code of meditation. They sit for some time in absolute silence, then make a sudden exclamation of a pious formula, spring up and walk fast round a table covered with images, the slackers being lashed by the superintending monks.

They live on vegetable food. Their meals are prepared in the monastery as they do not observe the custom of begging food. There is no regulation forbidding meals after midday.

The *upāsakas* and *upāsikās* live in the monastery and do the lower works. There are also many nunneries.

SECTS

There are ten schools of Buddhist thought in China. They may be broadly divided into six:

The first is *Ch'an* or *Dhyāna School* founded by Bodhidharma. This school rejected study of scriptures and practice of rituals, and

preferred oral instructions, their ideal being to develop a Buddha mind—a mind completely free of all thoughts—which, according to the Yogācāra philosophy, is the state of *Nirvāṇa*. To them worship of images or recitation of texts was superfluous.

The second school is *Lu-tsung* or the *Vinaya School* founded in 667 A.D. It sets the greatest value on the observance of the old monastic regulations. It exists in Pao-hua-shan near Nanking. These monks take two meals in the forenoon, afternoon meals being forbidden. It corresponds exactly to the Vinaya Schools like Theravāda prevailing at the present moment in Ceylon, Burma and Chittagong.

The third school is the *Tien-tai* or *Tendai* or *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* School. It tries to combine the philosophy of Bodhidharma with the reading and writing of scriptures.

The fourth school (*Nsien-shou-tsung*) is the *Avatamsaka school* attributed to Nāgārjuna. Its ideal is the attainment of Buddha nature or Dharmakāya, as envisaged in the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* or the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*.

The fifth school is *Tzu-en-tsung*, adopting the *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* of Vasubandhu as its main text.

The sixth is the *school of Western Paradise* (*Ching-tu-tsung*), the well-known Sukhāvati sect with Amitābha and Kwan Yin as the presiding deities.

CONCLUSION

The Chinese are a very practical people and do not care to go beyond everyday experiences. They are satisfied with positive and negative aspects of things. They concern themselves with the knowable and leave the unknowable, and have little regard for metaphysics. Confucius taught them the rules for social well-being, the sanctity of human relations between ruler and subject, husband and wife, parent and child and so forth, somewhat akin to Aśoka's *dhamma*. Taoism gave them a bit of metaphysics. Tao is the formative principle of the universe, the primordial matter corresponding to the *Prakṛiti* of Sāṃkhya, from which has emanated the phenomenal world. The mystic monistic tendency was

introduced by Taoism and was partially accepted by Confucianism. According to Lieh-tze of the ante-Chin period, the world of phenomena is derived from an unnameable absolute, the *Tao*; the soul reverts to its own essence after death; life and death, existence and non-existence, creation and annihilation are the laws of nature. Buddhism placed before the Chinese people its conception of *Sūnyatā* in a more scientific form. Along with the philosophy of *Sūnyatā* or *Vijñaptimātratā* it introduced the host of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and volumes of *mantras* and *tantras*, and made the Chinese people develop a polytheistic tendency. Its *Karma* theory also made an appeal to the Chinese heart which was already prepared for it by the Confucian teachings. But in spite of all that Buddhism has done in moulding the Chinese philosophy, religion, literature, art and architecture, it seems that Buddhism has not been able to bring a radical change in the outlook of their life in contradistinction to what it has been able to effect in Japan.

ISLAM

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Humanity is steadily progressing towards perfection and despite the existent strife between human communities and their seeming desire to overturn and destroy one another, they are in reality subordinated to certain forces which vigorously stir them up in order to bring out the best of those noble traits inherent in human nature.

Some nations may rise and others may fall, some communities may flourish and others may decay, the earth may quake under the very feet of society so much so that the onlooker would feign the world to be heading towards sure and inevitable destruction. The truth, however, is that its component parts are undergoing a reaction, even like that which chemicals undergo, to produce a new compound embodying all the distinctive qualities

of those parts, and to discharge a new function which none prior to it could have discharged, thus forming a prelude to further material and moral developments which follow one another and act conjointly for the fulfilment of the Lord's promise on earth.

For ages men lived in divided and contending communities differing widely in principles and doctrines. The human mind was shrouded in the vestiges of early primitiveness, and contentions and differences were wielded as strong factors to widen the human schism, while religions were employed as incentives to carry on the strife to its farthest limit. This state of things went on till means of communication and intercourse between races were facilitated and the need was felt to exchange products and utilities.

A new consciousness, hitherto unknown to the world, was born among nations necessitating the establishment of some relation between them which provides for co-operation in life in order to satisfy their mutual needs in their commonest and most simple forms. World trade was thus established and proved to be a means of understanding which contributed to tranquillity and peace. A new era in the history of the world was inaugurated bringing nations more and more together and paving the way for the greatest epoch of humanity, the epoch in which to unite mankind on a universal basis and make them strive together throughout the stages of life for the perfection of human knowledge and attainments.

In the beginning such unity remained a mere idea in the world. It passed through some minds hardly taking roots therein, yet growing stronger day by day until the advent of Mohammed the last of the Prophets—"Peace be upon him."

It was in that period that the Creator had seen it fit to render the mere idea into an accomplished fact. He ordained Islam for mankind and bade it spread into the farthest corners of the earth, inaugurating thereby a final era which humanity never before contemplated. Individual nations have been taught that all religions were false save the particular religion they followed. Whence then could the desired unity come to bind them all in one religion?

This was an intellectual impossibility. Some philosophers imagined this unity to be attainable only through the abandonment of all religions. But could that be conceivable among nations in whose blood ran the love of religion and to whom it was dearer than life itself?

How then did Islam solve this all-important problem 'within the bounds of reason and nature of things?

How did it justify itself in the minds of men to such an extent that all that was needed to convince and win an adversary of Islam was just to give him a clear and lucid exposition thereof?

Islam has proclaimed that, in its doctrinal principles, it is not a new religion ; but it is the first faith which the Lord had revealed unto Noah and continued to reveal to all Prophets after him. If men, however, find that religions differ in those principles, it is because of the corruption and distortion effected by the heads of those religions and the arbitrary and misguided interpretations which they put upon them out of spite and mutual jealousy.

It was with this pure and unadulterated faith that the Lord had eventually sent His Prophet Mohammed unto the world so that men might unite on a universal basis to enjoy the blessings of unity and turn in their entirety in an endeavour to attain the perfection promised to humanity.

The Lord's saying fully bears this out:

"Allah hath ordained to you the religion which He commanded unto Noah, and which We revealed to thee and which We commanded unto Abraham, Moses and Jesus: observe this religion by true belief and obedience, and divide not into sects concerning it. The worship of one God to which thou callest them is intolerable unto the unbelievers. Allah will choose to that Faith whomsoever He pleaseth, and will guide thereunto whomsoever shall turn unto Him."

Nor were the past generations divided among themselves, out of spite and mutual jealousy, till after the knowledge of the true Faith had come to them ; and had not a decree from thy Lord gone forth respiting them unto the Judgment Day, verily the

matter would have been decided by the destruction of the gain-sayers.

They who have inherited the Scripture after them are in perplexing doubt concerning it. Wherefore summon thou them unto the true Faith and go thou straight on as thou hast been bidden and follow not their vain desires, and say: I believe in all the Scriptures which The Lord hath sent down, and I am commanded to establish justice among you: Allah is our Lord and your Lord, the Creator and sustainer of all: unto us will our deeds be imputed and we will be recompensed thereon, and unto you your deeds will be imputed and you will be recompensed thereon.

“ Let there be no strife between us and you ; for Allah will bring us together on Resurrection Day and unto Him is the final return.” (Baidawy’s Commentary).

And:

“ Verily the true Religion with Allah is Islam and none other is acceptable unto Him ; and those who were given the Scriptures differed not concerning it until after the knowledge of its truth and authenticity had come unto them, out of mutual jealousy and the desire for supremacy ; and whosoever believeth not in the signs of Allah, verily Allah is prompt in reckoning with him.”

If they dispute with thee in religion and say: I have faithfully given myself unto Allah, as have they who followed me: And say unto them who received the Scriptures, and unto the ignorant who have no knowledge thereof: Do ye give yourselves unto Allah even as I have done, now that its truth has been established? If they embrace Islam, then they are rightly guided and are benefited thereby ; but if they turn away, verily thy task is only preaching that which hath been revealed unto you ; and Allah is regardful of His servants.” (Baidawy’s Commentary).

Should this explanation be given to anyone, it will find ready acceptance in his mind inasmuch as it lends peace and tranquillity to his heart and soul. For how could it be that God would reveal various religions differing in their doctrinal principles to nations

who are potentially and intellectually similar, whereas truth is one and the laws of nature are unchangeable?

Where then does the responsibility of this criminal difference rest, if not with the heads of religion?

Is it conceivable that universal knowledge should be one and the same everywhere and that its fundamental principles in any part of the world should be the same as in all parts, while religion should have different phases which contradict and impair one another?

Two things have ensured indefinite continuation and immortality to Islam: one is human nature and the other is the influence of pure reason. Men are the same in so far as the essential requisites of human nature are concerned. Whatever man's nature deems good or bad, all men deem the same, unless parents or teachers deliberately introduce corruption into this nature. It is a fundamental condition of Islam that this nature should remain pure and free of all taints which are apt to change its course.

As to the influence of pure reason, there could be no power on earth to rob man of it. It is a ray of God's light, a breath of His Divine Wisdom.

For centuries the heads of anterior religions have endeavoured to destroy it and have chastised by fire and steel, whomsoever sought its aid. But the Lord has lent it His support and rendered it victorious over all the evil forces which were marshalled against it. From this conflict, it has emerged pure and unsullied and today it is the final arbiter of right and wrong throughout the whole world.

Islam has fully depended on these two natural things even as an edifice rests on its main pillars, and in this connection the following Koranic verse is significant:

"Wherefore set thou thy face towards the true Faith deviating not therefrom: the law of Allah to which men are created and are naturally disposed. No one could change the creation of Allah. This is the right Faith but most men know it not." (Baidawy's Commentary).

The Creator explains that religion is just a streak of divine nature inborn in human souls, provided that this nature remains unimpaired by teachings which force it to change its natural course.

Yet this situation requires a certain element to direct in the right way. Men differ in natural instincts and hereditary traits. They may include the staid and the hasty, the far-sighted and the imprudent, the resolute and the irresolute, etc. It was therefore imperative to set up an arbitrator whose judgment will be binding on all, and no one but a vain and bigoted caviller would take exception thereto. This arbitrator is reason ; and since it is the basis of accountability and the umpire of right and wrong, it should be in such a position as to discharge satisfactorily this all-important function.

For this reason The Lord has urged for the perfection of the human mind through meditation of the signposts which He has set up in the universe to shed perfection thereon, and the beacons which He raised to light the way unto guidance and truth, so that it may gain strength and confidence in the judgment it pronounces and may not be confused by falsehood in its variegated forms.

The combination of human nature, mitigated by the influence of pure reason, is the religious basis with which The Lord has sent the last of the Prophets to proclaim unto nations so that they may be unified in religions and beliefs inasmuch as they are united in humanity, nature and intellect.

Bacon who had established the scientific system over three centuries ago, had succeeded in the unification of science all over the world by founding it on observation and experiment as well as on analysis and composition, and by excluding conjecture and hypothesis from its subject-matter. And if Bacon has merited the admiration of the world for this great achievement, Islam rightly deserves the greatest honour imaginable for the revelation of that religious system which contributed to the unity of distant people on whose lands the sun never sets.

Since Islam aims at the unification of nations in a new era

of humanity, we find its doctrines are based on this universal principle. It enjoined its followers to believe in all the messengers of God, to make no distinction between them and believe in the dispensations they were sent with.

This was made the basis of belief so that Islam may be given a universal character from all standpoints and in this connection The Lord saith:

“ Say ye believers: We believe in Allah and that which hath been sent down to us, and that which hath been sent down to Abraham and Ismael and Isaac and Jacob and his offspring, and that which was given to Moses and Jesus and that which was given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them and to Allah we are resigned.” (Baidawy’s Commentary).

THE BAHAI RELIGION

MRS. SHIRIN FOZDAR

• *Bombay*

Before I undertake to present in brief outline those events, persons and principles that combine to produce the significance of the Bahai Cause, permit me, on behalf of the Bahais resident outside as well as inside India, to express heart-felt and lasting gratitude towards those by whose vision and energy this Conference came into being. For this Conference, both in character and in method, expresses the ideal of religious unity so indelibly impressed upon all the members of the Bahai Cause, and its very existence, under these conditions of impressive dignity and far-reaching influence, appears to us as the fulfilment of a glorious, long-cherished hope.

After eighty years of existence, the particular genius inspiring the Bahai Cause, clearly expressed by its founder and universally accepted by all its adherents, is the ideal of Unity consciously binding the hearts of men.

Both as a spiritual doctrine and as a living movement rooted

in well-nigh incredible sacrifice and heroism, the Bahai Cause can well be presented in the light of the gradual working out of the ideal.

The origin of the Cause itself coincided in point of time with the beginnings of what all thoughtful people discern to be a new era in the development of mankind. In the West, the new era manifested itself most visibly through the abrupt industrial revolution produced by the influence of scientific discovery; in the East, less visibly, the same ferment and universal spirit of change also had its effects in the realm of feeling and thought.

It was in that country of the Orient least touched by the Western influence,—that country, Persia, least known to the people of the West and least significant to them politically, economically or morally—that country, most firmly bound to its own separate tradition and to all appearances most incapable of throwing off the fetters of the dead past, that Bahauallah, founder of the Bahai Cause, arose with a message instinct with the enthusiasm of a new day.

History, that greatest of romances, surely never played a drama of human destiny upon a stage so completely in contrast with the players or with the theme! All the machinery of daily life in Persia at that time was devised to resist change; of external assistance or accidental reinforcement for the purpose of Bahauallah there was none; the idea of progress even in the economic aspects of life did not exist; arts, crafts, professions, education, creed and custom all combined to sanctify the excellence of what had been; available only to this pure spirit was the innate influence of his unswerving faith, indomitable courage, singleness of purpose, willingness to sacrifice ease, comfort, honour and life itself upon the path, and a mind able to impress other minds with the integrity of new principles and ideals.

But, for the message of Bahauallah due preparation, in fact, had already been made.

Between May 23, 1844 and July 9, 1850 occurred that remarkable series of events known to history as the "Episode of the Bah." Within the brief compass of six years a single youth had

succeeded in shattering the age-long inertia of the country and animating thousands of people with an intense, all-encompassing expectation of an imminent fulfilment of their profoundest religious belief. The teaching had been quietly spread even before the appearance of the Bah so that the time had come for a new spiritual leader—one who would restore the foundations of faith and open the gates to an expression of universal truth. A survey of the religious experience of other peoples would reveal the working of the same influence here and there both in the East and in the West at that time.

The martyrdom of the Bah in 1850 was but the extinguishing of a torch which had already communicated its flame far and wide. To extinguish the flame itself proved impossible, though the annals of the world's religions contain no record of deliberate persecution more cruelly imposed, nor suffered voluntarily by so many believers. The figure most generally accepted of the Bahi and Bahai martyrs is in excess of twenty thousand souls. Such was the price paid for faith in the promise of the Bah—such the spiritual heritage the Bah in passing handed on to him whom he had heralded as Bahauallah!

To take up this spiritual heritage,—to arouse this vivid expectation in thousands of faithful hearts and to inspire them with permanent principles—to establish a mould of doctrine and new custom for this fluid fire was, for Bahauallah, the descent from a position of highest material comfort and authority to the lowest degree of poverty, imprisonment, suffering and exile. All that worldly men cherish and long for, Bahauallah freely sacrificed in order that his vision of God might be fulfilled and perpetuated in the conscious unity of men. As the desperate forces of reaction gathered against him, ecclesiastical and civil authorities of Persia realizing that their influence would be destroyed by the spread of the enlightened teachings of Bahauallah, he and his little band of faithful followers were imprisoned in Tehran, stripped of property and rights, exiled to Baghdad, to Constantinople, to Adrianople and at last, as the supreme infliction, in 1868 confined for life in the desolate barracks of Akka, a Turkish penal colony near Mount Camel in the Holy land. Scarcely fifty years later, as the

Bahais point out, those responsible for the exile and imprisonment of Bahaullah—the Shah of Persia, and the Sultan of Turkey—were themselves abjectly hurled down from power.

Voluntarily sharing these ordeals from very childhood was the eldest son of Bahaullah, Abdul Baha (servant of Baha), whose confinement at Akka lasting forty years was terminated in 1908 by the Turkish Revolution initiated by the Young Turk Party.

When Bahaullah arrived in Akka, through the power of God he was able to hoist his banner. His light at first had been a star; now it became a mighty sun and the illumination of his cause expanded from the East to the West. Inside prison walls he wrote epistles to all kings and rulers of nations, summoning them to arbitration and Universal Peace. Some of the kings received his words with disdain and contempt. One of these was the Sultan of the Ottoman kingdom. Napoleon III of France did not reply. A second epistle was addressed to him. It stated, "I have written you an epistle before this, summoning you to the cause of God, but you are of the heedless. You have proclaimed that you were the defender of the oppressed; now it hath become evident that you are not. Nor are you kind to your own suffering and oppressed people. Your actions are contrary to your own interests and your kingly pride must fall. Because of your arrogance God will surely destroy your sovereignty. France will flee away from you and you will be overwhelmed by a great conquest. There will be lamentation and mourning, women bemoaning the loss of their sons." This arraignment of Napoleon III was published and spread.

Read it and consider, one prisoner single and solitary without assistance or defender, a foreigner and stranger imprisoned in the fortress of Akka writing such letters to the Emperor of France and the Sultan of Turkey. Reflect upon this—how Bahaullah upraised the standard of his cause in prison. Refer to history. It is without parallel. No such thing has happened before that time nor since—a prisoner and an exile advancing his cause and spreading his teachings broadcast, so that eventually he became powerful enough to conquer the very king who banished him.

Bahau'llah's teaching reflected no acquired learning—it was an immediate experience in the soul of one who turned wholly and directly to God. "Oneness, in its true significance," he has said, "means that God alone should be realized as the one power which animates and dominates all things, which are but manifestations of its energy."

Bahau'llah teaches that all the founders of religion are successive, correlated expressions of the will of God, identical as to purpose and function, separate and diverse only in that each founder adapted the one divine teaching to the particular needs of his time. The glory of this age, according to Bahau'llah, is its capacity to understand the oneness of all religions; and his inextinguishable vision of united humanity vitalizes a method of unity based upon that understanding.

This point is essential to any consideration of the Bahai Cause. Let us turn to Bahau'llah's own words, "God singly and alone abideth in His place which is holy above space and time, mention and utterance, sign, description and definition, height and depth. God hath been and is everlastingly hidden in His own essence and will be eternally concealed in His identity from the sight of eyes. Nay, there hath not been nor will be any connection or relation between the created beings and His word.

"Therefore God hath caused brilliant essences of sanctity to appear from the holy worlds of the spirit, in human bodies, walking, among mankind, in accordance with His abundant mercy. These mirrors of sanctity fully reflect that sun of existence and Essence of desire. Those who earnestly endeavour in the way of God, after severance from all else, will become so attached to that city that they will never abandon it for an instant. This city is the revelation of God renewed every one thousand years, more or less."

In every age and dispensation all divine ordinances are changed according to the requirements of the time, except the law of Love which, like unto a fountain flows always and is never overtaken by change.

Bahau'llah departed from this world in 1892, leaving among

his papers a will or testament appointing his eldest son, Abdul Baha, as the executive head of his Cause, and the interpreter of his teaching. The statement may be made without reservation that no previous religious teaching ever dealt with the innumerable problems of daily existence with such a degree of purity as Abdul Baha maintained for the message of Bahauallah.

What unique claim, one may ask, has this message upon our attention? What element does it bring, which is not already contained in the older religious systems of the world? How can this new Cause contribute to a solution of those world-problems under which humanity staggers today?

"Guidance," said Bahauallah, "hath ever been by words, but now it is by deeds."

True to this counsel, Abdul Baha first applied to his own life those ordinances and principles he received from the teachings of Bahauallah. The principles developed by Abdul Baha may fairly be considered his characteristic solution of the problems of this age.

Let us attempt a brief summary of these principles:—

(1) *Independent investigation of Reality*—Discover for yourselves the reality of things, and strive to assimilate the methods by which noble-mindedness and glory are attained among the nations and people of the world.

No man should follow blindly his ancestors and forefathers. Nay, each must see with his own eyes and hear with his own ears and investigate independently in order that he may find the truth. The religion of forefathers and ancestors is based upon blind imitations. Man should investigate reality.

(2) *Abandonment of all prejudice*—Beware of prejudice; light is good in whatsoever lamp it is burning. A rose is beautiful in whatsoever garden it may bloom. A star has the same radiance whether it shines from the East or from the West. Religious hatred and rancour is a world-consuming fire. All the prophets of God have come to unite the children of men and not to disperse them, to put into action the law of love and not

enmity. We must banish prejudice. Religious, patriotic and racial prejudices must disappear, for they are the destroyers of human society. We must become the cause of the unity of the human race.

(3) *The oneness of mankind*—Today, as we see and feel the immediate inter-action of events and conditions throughout the world, and how no portion of humanity is independent of any other portion, we begin to realize something of the significance of this teaching. White doves and gray doves associate with one another in perfect friendship. Man draws imaginary lines on the planet and says, "This is a Frenchman, a Mussulman, an Italian!" Upon these differences wars are waged. Men are fighting for the possession of the earth. They fight for that which becomes their graves, their cemeteries, their tombs!

In reality all are the members of one human family—children of one Heavenly Father. Humanity may be likened unto the multi-coloured flowers of one garden. There is unity in diversity. Each sets off and enhances the other's beauty.

(4) *The Foundation of all Religions is one*—The foundation underlying all divine precepts is one Reality. It must needs be Reality and Reality is one. Therefore, the foundation of the divine religions is one. But we can see that certain forms and ceremonies have crept in. They are heretical, they are accidental ; because they differ, hence they cause differences among religions. If we set aside all these superstitions and seek the reality of the foundation, we shall all agree, because it is one and not multiple.

(5) *Religion must be in accordance with Science and Reason*—As a matter of fact, while irrational religion and materialistic science seem outwardly opposed, inwardly they are equally conditions of being that manifest the absence of the Holy Spirit. Both are plants confined in darkness and both are ships deprived of sails. Where the Holy Spirit obtains, all seeming antagonism between science and religion vanishes, for there is but one Reality, though this can be cognized by the several faculties on the several planes.

Religion and Science must be brought together, indissolubly

in Reality. Down to the present day it has been customary for man to accept blindly what was called religion, even if it were not in accordance with human reason.

(6) *Establishment of an International Auxiliary Language*—As the nervous system is one throughout the body, and co-ordinates all the organs and limbs, so the body of humanity requires one universal language and writing to be learnt by all people in addition to the mother tongue, which will serve to interpret its needs, write its interests and consolidate its purposes; and diversity of tongues engenders the paralysis of the body of mankind.

(7) *Universal Education*—Partaking of knowledge and education is one of the requisites of religion. The education of each child is obligatory. If there are no parents, the community must look after the child. It is suggested that the childless should educate a child.

(8) *The solution of the Economic Problem*—The solution of the economic problem Abdul Baha declared to be a distinctive characteristic of religion in its universal aspect; for no human power or alliance of powers hitherto has been able to work out a solution. One of the elements is the universal obligation of useful labour. Useful labour, performed in the spirit of service and with the ideal of perfection, is accounted an act of worship and a form of prayer. Abdul Baha has also expressed as an organic universal principle the equality of man and woman. This is peculiar to the teachings of Bahaullah. All former religions gave man a higher status than woman, but Bahaullah has declared that they are equal in all conditions and degrees. The importance attributed to this principle in the Bahai's Cause can be measured by another teaching to the effect that parents who can afford to educate only one child should give preference to daughter over son, the reason being that mothers are the first educators of the race.

At the very dawn of the feminist movement it was a Bahai in fact, the famous poetess Quarrat-al-Ayn, who first threw off the traditional veil of the Oriental woman, and entered that extraordinary career of public teaching which led to her martyrdom by the enemies of Bahaullah.

The arch which these social principles of Abdul Baha, like pillars, are intended to support, the structure which fulfils their purpose and directs their use, is the principle of an International Tribunal. Abdul Baha regards the function of legislation as a function of illumined minds severed from all considerations save those of justice and truth.

When the whole human race has been consulted through its representatives and invited to corroborate this treaty which verily will be accounted sacred by all the peoples of the earth, it will be the duty of the united powers of the world to see that this treaty shall endure.

The principle by which Abdul Baha is most widely known is that of Universal Peace. He says that peace, perfect peace, must first possess the heart, through the breaths of the Holy Spirit.

Thus, in brief, has the successor and interpreter of Bahaullah established a vital contact for his followers with the fundamental needs of the time—a contact which carries religion into the very heart of life, yet without impairing its essential sanctity and holiness. The social aspects of the Bahai teaching are extremely important at the present day.

The relationship of social service to the religious life, so strongly emphasized in the Bahai teachings, is perfectly symbolized in the form of the Temple, or Universal House of Worship which Bahaullah established. The Bahai Temple, nearing completion at Wilmett, a suburb of Chicago, on the shores of lake Michigan in the United States, embodies this conception on a most impressive scale. Open to all men and women without distinction of race, class, creed or colour, this institution will consist of a central structure devoted to meditation and prayer, surrounded by other edifices, used as schools, asylums, hospitals, hostels and orphanages—the embodiment, in fact, not merely of the relationship of religion to life, but also of soul to body. The world contains no purer expression of the new inter-religious, inter-racial and international brotherhood that is coming to fruition in this age.

The Bahai Revelation is the Spirit of this age. It is the

essence of all the highest ideals of this century. The Bahai Cause is an inclusive movement—the teachings of all religions and societies are found here. Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Moham-medans, Zoroastrians, Theosophists, Freemasons, Socialists etc.—all find their highest aims in this Cause. Socialists and philosophers find their theories fully developed in this Revelation.

Leaders of religion, exponents of political theories, governors of human institutions, who at present are witnessing with perplexity and dismay the bankruptcy of their ideas and the disintegration of their handiwork, would do well to turn their gaze at the Revelation of Bahau'llah and to meditate upon the World Order, which, lying enshrined in his teachings, is slowly and imperceptibly rising around the welter and chaos of present-day civilization.

THE AVADHŪTA ORDER OF MONKS IN THE GAUḌIYA SCHOOL OF THE ŚĀKTAS

SRIMAT KALI KRISHNANANDA GIRI

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By the word '*Avadhūta*' we mean one who belongs to the '*fifth āśrama*' which is above the '*turiya* or the fourth *āśrama* of the Smārta philosophers.' This '*turiyāśrama*' is known otherwise as '*sannyāsāśrama*' of the Vaidikas. By '*Vaidikas*' I mean only those who happen to be invested with the '*holy threads*' (*upanayana*) according to the canons of the *Grihya Sūtras* of the Veda to which they traditionally belong. But this *Vaidika sannyāsa* is forbidden in the present Age of Kali in view of the fact that the Age is not suited to the observance of the rituals as prescribed by the Vedas. Manu, the great law-giver, is explicit on the point. Manu says that one who is fallen from the rituals of the Vedas, cannot expect to enjoy the fruits thereof. The situation of things in the present age is such that the Vedic rituals (*āchāra*) cannot be followed. This is why they have taken to the system of *dīkshā* or initiation which is wholly based on the

rules and canons as prescribed by Śiva in the course of His famous discourses with His Spouse and which had the sanction of Viṣṇu behind them. These discourses are as authoritative as the Vedas themselves. For, if the words of Brahmā are accepted as infallible and authoritative, why should not the words which have fallen from the lips of Hara and Pārvatī not be taken as equally infallible and authoritative? Besides, society is not static. It is dynamic, it changes as the ages roll by. And with the revolution of ages and empires new scriptures have been in force. In the Satya Yuga we had the Śrutis to govern us; in the Tretā which followed, we had the Smṛitis to govern the society; in the Third Age of Dvāpara there were the Purāṇas and the Itihāsas such as the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata. In the present age of Kali, we have the discourses between Śiva and Śakti to guide us in the civic, social and religious planes of our life and thought. In the present age one who receives initiation from the *guru* and duly takes to the life of renunciation, according to the rules and canons as given in the discourses between Śiva and Śakti, is known by the name of 'Avadhūta' or merely a 'sannyāsāśrami.' Thus the *Avadhūta* is an order of monks in the Kali Age, who are more ruled by the canons of the *Tantras* which are but embodiments of the various discourses between Śiva and Śakti.

The *Avadhūta* as an order of monks is seen to be of various denominations. There are the *Brahmāvadhūtas* who are *Brahmavādins*, the *Saivāvadhūtas* who are initiated in the Śaiva cult and the *Vaiṣṇavāvadhūtas* amongst worshippers of Viṣṇu. But there is another class of *Avadhūtas* who are known as the *Sāktā*-or *Kulāvadhūta* for their worshipping the Divine Power as the Great Magna matter of the World. These *avadhūtas* differ from one another not only in their thought, theology and ritual worship of their respective *Ishtas* or Ideals, but also in their outward garb and mode of living. I would have to digress long if I were to dwell on these differences of various kinds which subsist between them. I propose, therefore, to deal with the *Avadhūtas* or the monastic order of the *Sāktas*, i.e. the worshippers of Śakti or Power of Paramaśiva or Pure Consciousness revealing Itself as It does in the supreme unitary experience of the highest *samādhi*.

But the worshippers of Śakti as the Power of *Brahman* or *Paramaśiva*, are divided into a good number of schools of thought, theology and worship. For, there is the Kerala school of Śakti worshippers which constitutes the *samaya*-group and according to which there is no worship in the Macrocosm. Then there is the Kashmir school of Śakti worshippers who though constituting the *Kaula*-group by their following the worship in the Macrocosm, differ from the Śakti worshippers in Gauḍa in a good many important matters of ritual which is but the outward material expression of the inward thoughts and sentiments of the worshipper. I shall dwell briefly on the monastic order of the Gauḍīya school of the Śāktas or worshippers of the Śakti as the Great Mother of the Universe—the *Kulāvadhūtas* of the Gauḍīya school of thought, theology and worship.

But where is Gauḍa after which a famous religious school has been named? Historians mention five countries as Gauḍa ; they' are Sārasvata, Kanyākubja, Mithilā, Utkal and Gauḍa. These five countries are known to the Indian sociologists as constituting the Gauḍa. And the Śakti worship as ritually followed in these countries is known as the Gauḍīya School. But as there are subdivisions of thought and theology which are known by the names of Sarasvatī school, Kanouji school, Maithilī school, etc. in the Gauḍīya school, I am inclined to lay more stress on the Gauḍa proper than on other countries in my determination of the nature and character of the Gauḍīya School of Śakti worship. I am inclined to hold on to this view on the strength of a text which I received from my revered friend Tantrajñānakulārṇava Pandit Kṛṣṇa Chandra Vedāntachīntāmaṇi. The text means to say that the northern face of the Great Śiva represents the Gauḍa (*Uttarāmnāya Gauḍa syāt*) where the Atharvan is the Veda (*Vedātharva prokta*) and Dakṣiṇa Kālīkā is the Presiding Deity (*Adhishṭhātrī devatā cha Dakṣiṇā Kālīkā*). To make his contention clear the Pandit explains that while the Great Śiva as an embodiment of the *Mahāpranava* (*Om*) has seven faces, for the purposes of daily worship He is spoken of as a God with five faces and with three eyes in each (*pañchavaktram trinetram*). The celebrated hymn on the 'Five-fold Foot-stool of Śrī Guru,'

speaks of the five faces of the Sovereign Guide. These faces are known as (i) the *paschima* or the western face, (ii) the *Dakṣiṇa* or the southern face, (iii) the *pūrva* or the eastern face, (iv) the *uttara* or the northern face and (v) the *niruttara* or the upper face. It is by each of these faces that the Sovereign Guide as the First Great Author of all forms of knowledge (*Ādikartā Śivaḥ sākṣhāt Sūlapāṇi Maheśvaraḥ*) revealed the various deities worshipped by various schools, recited the *mantras* by which the deities were to be worshipped and the rituals which were to be observed in the procedure of worship of these deities. These faces which are technically known as '*Āmnāyas*' thus represent the different schools of thought, theology and worship. We are told that just as the western face of the Great God represents the Kashmir School, so the northern face stands for Gauḍa where the Goddess Kālikā is the presiding deity, Tārīṇī being the presiding deity in the Kashmir School. By the northern face, Śrī Guru revealed the feminine deities beginning with Dakṣiṇā Kālikā, Tārā or Nīla Śarasvatī, Mahiṣīmardini Durgā and the like as verities of the Primordial Power (*Ādyāśakti*) of the Universal Consciousness (*Parmaśiva*). That the deities which were revealed by the northern face are the favourites of Bengal for worship, is acknowledged on all hands. This is why it has been said in the scriptures that Kālikā and Her verities are in Bengal (*Kālikā Vaṅgadeśeta*). But Śiva Himself defines the boundaries of Gauḍa when he says that Gauḍa has on the north Nepal, on the west the Vindhya Hills, on the south the great ocean and on the east the great Kalinga. The Gauḍīya School of the Śāktas are, therefore, those worshippers of the deities of the northern face who live within the religious jurisdiction of the Vishṇukrānta which extends from the north-eastern borders of the Vindhya Hills and runs eastwards and where the *mantras* and rituals as prescribed by the northern face of the Sovereign Guide are followed in the worship of the said deities.

Now, although so vast and extensive is the jurisdiction of the *Uttarāmnāya* or the northern face of the Great God whereof the Rishi is Vāmadeva who is mentioned also in the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* in connection with the *Vāmadevya vratas*, yet it is in

Gauḍa proper which is identical with Bengal that we find the real Gauḍa school of the Śāktas. According to this school of thought, theology and ritual worship of the deities of the northern face, one is not entitled to worship any of the deities unless he is properly initiated by the ritual performance of *abhisheka*. One must have the full initiation before one could be rightly permitted to worship any of the Goddesses of the *Uttarāmnāya*. For instance, to be initiated into the worship of Dakṣinā Kālīkā, one is required to go through the ceremonial performances of the full Initiation. In the worship of Tārīṇī on *pañchamunḍī* the aspirant is required to be initiated into *krama*, in the worship of Mahā-śoḍaśī the 'Sāmrajya' initiation is needed, and so on. All these forms of initiation beginning with the *pūrṇābhisheka* and ending with the *mahā pūrṇā* or *virajā grahaṇābhisheka*, are uniformly characterized by the *pañchatattva* ritual with slight differences in the matter of the last *tattva* which is substituted by the performance of *japa* involving the coupling of the lips.

Thus it appears that according to the Gauḍīya School of Śakti worship, the aspirant must at least have the full initiation (*Pūrṇābhisheka*). And the aspirant who has such initiation is an *avadhūta* or a member of the 'fifth āśrama' above the *turiya* of the Vedic *sannyāsins*. The *sādhakas* of the Gauḍīya School of Śakti worship, therefore, are all *avadhūtas* and as such they are called *Kulāvadhūtas*. For, 'kula' means Śakti, just as 'akula' means Śiva for which reason the *Saivāvadhūtas* are known by the name of *Nakulāvadhūtas*.

The *kulāvadhūtas*, as such constitute the monastic order of the Gauḍīya School. For, they are monks, or members of the *sannyāsāśrama*, as prescribed by the Āgamas and the Nigamas. But a distinction is drawn between these *avadhūtas* of the Gauḍīya school from the mode of life they lead on earth. Some live with families to hide their faith and cult while others formally renounce the family to live openly as *bhikṣhus* dwelling in the *maṭhas* or *akhāḍas*. The former is, therefore, known as 'hidden' (*gupta*) monks, while the latter is known by the name of the 'avowed' (*vyakta*) monks. But whether 'hidden' or 'avowed,' these monks of the Gauḍīya School differ from the monks of other schools, by

their use of certain rituals. For, generally speaking, all are agreed in the matter of the evolution of the World when it is said that the Ultimate Reality which is Pure Consciousness by virtue of Its own Power polarizes Itself into positive and negative, into *Purusha* and *Prakṛiti*, into Śiva and Śakti as revealed in the conjoint figure of half-man and half-woman which again, subsequently splits up into two distinct entities only to unite again, in consequence whereof we have the embodied souls (*jīvas*), the world of matter and motion (*jagat*) and the twenty-four categories (*chaturvīṁśati tattva*) of the Sāṃkhya materialists. The *Kulāvadhūtas* whether 'hidden' or 'avowed' of the Gauḍīya School differ from the Kerala school, for instance, by their worship of the Devī in the Macrocosm and by their use of *Mahākapāla* as *pātra*. The monks of the Gauḍīya School differ from the monks of the Kashmir school who use cocoanut shells as *pātras*, and other substitutes in the place of the real *Pañchatattva*.

Be that as it may, it is clear that it is the monks who, according to the Gauḍīya School, are entitled to worship the deities of the northern face. For, it is they who rightly speaking, can strive to realize that *jīva* is *haṃsa* and that this *haṃsa* is ultimately the 'So'ham' (*jīvo haṃseti samproktaḥ, haṃsa so'ham svarūpiṇī*). The monks of the Gauḍīya School which is represented by the northern face of Śiva have the ascetic title 'Giri,' by which they are still known to the people.

BUDDHISM IN THE MODERN WORLD

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When the Buddha after his enlightenment arrived at the Deer Park near Benares, he was nothing but a lonely wanderer, a pilgrim like thousands who daily go to that sacred city. He was forsaken by his friends, given up by his family—nobody knew of his great victory, no visible sign was there to convince the

world. And even had it been possible to impress the world by signs and miracles, the Buddha had been the last to use such means.

And yet this lonely pilgrim carried in his heart that light which was to illuminate the world and to shape the face of humanity!

It is good to keep this picture in mind, because we are living in a time in which worldly power seems to be the only reality and in which brutal force is worshipped as the ultimate authority. It is good to keep in mind that those who have proved stronger than the power of kings and emperors, stronger than wealth and armies, stronger than time and even death, have been lonely and forsaken, have been wanderers like us in the pitiless desert of *Samsāra*. It will give us the courage to plant the banner of truth in a hostile world. It will make us feel that we carry within us the seeds of enlightenment and that it only depends on our own effort to cultivate them and cause them to burst their shells and open their petals. This faith in our own latent forces is the only faith the Buddha demands. Without this faith nothing can be achieved. But the Buddha most probably would not have used the word "own," because we possess these forces as little as the light that falls into our room: we only partake in it. Thus this faith is not the self-confidence which very often grows into arrogance, but the confidence that our little ego will not prove a permanent prison, the faith in the immanent liberty of man. The first words of the Buddha after his enlightenment were:

*"Apāruā tesam amatassa dvārā,
Ye sotavanto, pamāñchantu saddham."*

"Wide open are the gates of immortality,
Ye that have ears to hear, release your faith!"

That the Buddha with this 'faith' (*saddhā*) did not speculate upon the credulity of the people may be seen from the fact that the first proclamation of his teachings was addressed to those of his former companions who had lost their confidence in him and met him with the greatest diffidence. When they saw the Buddha coming through the Deer Park, they decided neither to greet nor to welcome him, but to treat him with contemptuous indifference.

But what happened? When the Buddha approached, they rose one after the other from their seats and went to meet him. His face bore the expression of his great spiritual victory, his eyes had the deep glance of one who had gone through the mysteries of life and death and had conquered them, his whole personality was radiating happiness, as if the inner light had saturated and penetrated his bodily form. Never a man's expression and behaviour revealed a greater power of conviction, sincerity and devotion to truth, combined with the ardent desire to communicate this highest experience to others for the benefit of all living beings than that of the Buddha in this historic moment. It was this sincerity and perfect harmony of his whole being which gave his words the enormous effect, an effect which has overbridged millenniums and which makes his message reverberate in our hearts, as if those words were spoken at this very moment. All the happiness which the Buddha had silently enjoyed during the weeks after his enlightenment in the loneliness of the forest, is condensed in the solemn exclamation with which he addresses those five ascetics in the Deer Park:

"Open your ears, O monks; the deliverance from death is found!"

Strange enough, this happy message is almost forgotten among modern students of Buddhism, especially among those of the West, who have tried to interpret Buddhism as a kind of pessimistic philosophy or a life-negating rationalism. But just this very first sermon of the Buddha which opens with these triumphant words shows clearly the fundamental standpoint of his teaching—the idea of the Middle Way, which is as far from a life of selfish enjoyments as from that of self-mortification and gloominess, but which, free from these extremes, "enlightens the eye, enlightens the mind, leads to peace, knowledge, to enlightenment."

This avoidance of extremes, applied to both the practical and the spiritual life, gave birth to a new kind of thinking, even to a new system of logic and later on to the greatest philosophies of Asia in which the idea of *relativity* forms the axis around which everything moves. This idea, if properly understood, would be

the great remedy for the ills of the modern world in which the extremes in thought, in religion, in politics, and in life have torn humanity into pieces and have resulted in a hopeless struggle of all against all. Though relativity has been acknowledged by science, present humanity is far from understanding its spiritual and practical consequences, which would mean a *living relationship* between everything that exists, a recognition of the necessary differences in life and mental outlook, the avoidance of the extremes of a rigid mechanical law and lawlessness, the overcoming of dogmatism and the absolutism of concepts, and the creation of real tolerance. That tolerance can go very well together with strong convictions has been proved by the practice of the Middle Path in the history of Buddhism, and I therefore think that Buddhism is specially qualified to bring peace and harmony in the present world and to mediate between the conflicting views of humanity.

Organized, dogmatic religions have always been extremists. They divided men into believers and unbelievers. They claimed each to be the only authority, they dictated what man should do and what he should not. In their attitude towards the world they were never capable of judging impartially. They either praised or condemned the world. Men were not allowed to think independently. They had to act according to prescribed rules and to obey the given orders. They had to believe certain revelations and to follow certain traditions. The worship of this or that deity was indispensable for liberation. People could not think in other terms than 'good' or 'bad,' 'right' or 'wrong,' 'moral' or 'immoral,' 'absolute existence of the soul' or 'non-existence,' 'eternal life' or 'eternal death,' 'reality of the mind' or 'reality of the world' and similar extremes. They were caught between 'yes' and 'no,' stranding either at the one or at the other side—blind to the fact that reality is beyond such logical polarities.

The Middle Path of the Buddha compels nobody to believe in God or Gods, nor does it prevent anybody from doing so. What a man *believes* is his private matter. Just as a physician does not ask the patient what he believes but what he is suffering

from, so the Buddha investigates the sufferings of humanity. After having analysed them, he understands their cause and prescribes the remedy for their removal—the Noble Eightfold Path, leading to spiritual health and harmony, *Nibbāṇa*. The constituents of this Path are:

1. Right understanding (*sammā ditthi*), namely of the fact of suffering, of its origin, the possibilities of its annihilation, and the practical way towards the liberation from suffering ("The Four Noble Truths.")
2. Right aspiration (*sammā saṃkappa*)—the right mental attitude (sympathy and selflessness).
3. Right speech (*sammā vācā*)—truthful, kindly and to the point.
4. Right action (*sammā kamanta*) in harmony with the mental attitude.
5. Right livelihood (*sammā ājiva*) for the benefit of both ourselves and others (avoiding trades and professions which are harmful to others and to our own spiritual progress).
6. Right effort (*sammā vāyāma*) to overcome our weakness and to produce and cultivate the best within us.
7. Right attentiveness (*sammā sati*) or contemplation of the body, the feelings, the mind and its phenomena.
8. Right concentration (*sammā samādhi*)—the synthesis and 'internalization' of all the previous steps in the intuitive state of meditation.

There is nothing in this Path which could not be accepted by every man and by every religion. It contains only that upon which all religions agree and it avoids all that upon which the religions disagree and on account of which people hate, persecute and kill one another, namely dogmas and all such things which are a matter of mere belief. There is no 'thou shalt' or 'thou shalt not'—but 'I am determined,' 'I make the firm decision,' 'I pledge myself,' and 'I am ready to take upon me the consequences.' There is no room for sin or condemnation. As long as man has not sufficient insight into the laws of life and the

nature of things, he will act foolishly and suffer from its results. But this suffering is not a humiliating punishment but the natural effect which will teach him much more than the commands of an external power. Everybody is his own teacher. This does not exclude mutual help, but it means that there is no authority to be followed, no dogma which one has to believe. Not even the Buddha wanted to be followed as an 'authority.' The Buddha once asked Ānanda whether he followed him out of faith and veneration or because he had understood and realized the teachings (the *Dhamma*) within himself. Ānanda answered that he followed the Buddha's teaching on account of his own insight into the *Dhamma*, whereupon the Buddha expressed his satisfaction and told Ānanda that if he had followed him only in blind faith, he would not have been benefited by his teachings. The Buddha did not want his followers to *believe* in his words, but to understand them, to take them as a starting point of their own investigations and experience. The greatest knowledge cannot help us, if we have not acquired it by our own effort. Therefore, more important than showing the truth is to show the path that leads towards its realization.

The Buddha, for this reason, did not try to explain the world but open the eyes of the people. He did not waste his time in metaphysical speculations, but showed the way towards the experience of Reality.

Enlightenment consists in the *removal of hindrances* that obstruct the light. And as this light exists everywhere (potentially), it cannot be created but only revealed. It is visible to all who open their eyes. It is a *direct experience*, not a mere belief, nor a hypothesis or theory that is to be proved.

The light is *universal*, but everybody must see with his *own eyes*. Buddhism, therefore, which—as its name indicates—is the way to enlightenment, is a religion which is both *universal* (undogmatic) and *individual*, and is thus able to satisfy the needs of the modern man and to extend its sympathetic co-operation to all other religions which are striving for the creation of a better world and a happier humanity.

INTRODUCTION TO SHINTO THEOLOGY

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If, as Sri Ramakrishna has said, religion offers enlightenment to the soul which is groping in the dark wilderness, if, in other words, religion is a Life-tree,—Life's roots, trunk and branches, even its flowers and fruits—then that Life-tree of the Japanese nation, that backbone from which has emanated an uninterrupted flow of enlightenment which has served to preserve the growth of Japan's national life, I should say in all firmness, is Shinto. 'Shinto' may be translated into English as 'The Way of the Gods,' or 'The God-like Way,' or 'The Way from the Gods,' although, it is necessary to mention here, all these translations fail to be adequate. From time immemorial Shinto has been conceived by the Japanese as an 'All-pervading Indefinable Way' which is quite universal. The oldest interpretation of Shinto, as we are able to find it in *Nihon-shoki* (one of the two oldest Chronicles of Japan), says that Shinto implies spontaneous following of the 'Way of the Gods,' which (i.e. the 'Way') is immanent in every human being. Shinto, therefore, cannot be called as one 'ism' as opposed to other religious 'isms'; but it constitutes a teaching which is found on the most universal principle of realizing Shinto in other religions, while at the same time realizing all the other religions in Shinto. One of the most significant characteristics of Shinto is that it defies all efforts on the part of scholars to confine it to a set of cut and dry verbal theories or concepts. It is a fundamental mistake to propose to subject the omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience of 'The All-pervading Way' to verbal limits, and therefore, those follow a mistaken path whose minds are motivated by the desire to set up Shinto in a well-defined form distinctly holding its own against other religions. Why did Shinto refuse all this time to be subjected to theoretical and conceptual treatment? To this question the answer is as follows: The Japanese Deities, according to *Manyōshū* (which is the oldest Japanese anthology), are supposed to observe *Koto-agesenu* which means 'non-raising of words.' Now, this fact signifies that they

even go so far as to perceive, should I say, a distance between even the Logos and the Absolute Reality, considering the former as a mere attribute of the latter and as such a mere means of expression which is quite different from the Reality. Due mainly to this sharp distinction between even the Logos and the Absolute Reality, Shinto, on the one hand, was kept from becoming standardized and theorized, but on the other, it could also retain its freshness and vitality for these three thousand years, and was saved from the fate of being divided into several sects and minor sects. If one finds that Shinto, on one side, has succeeded in consummating Confucianism, Buddhism and Christianity respectively in the national life of Japan and has, on the other, found a most appropriate vehicle of self-expression in each of them, one will have to admit that the fact is due chiefly to its insistence in dealing directly with the Reality regardless of its attributes. The world may wonder at the fact that a Japanese who is a faithful follower of Shinto can at the same time be a Confucianist, or a Buddhist, or a Christian, or what not, but for us Shintoists this very view of the world comes as a surprise, since in our eyes the world seems to be concerned only with the forms or attributes without any regard whatsoever for the Reality. Accordingly, in my opinion, Shinto finds its best expression in the teachings of the great Ramakrishna and as such the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of this great master's birth has got a meaningful significance for us Shintoists.

It is no exaggeration to say that a proper understanding of the Japanese nation as well as culture remains inaccessible so long as a thorough understanding of Shinto is not attempted. This point, however, is precisely the one which is usually overlooked by foreign students of Japanese culture. And it is therefore that no foreigner could as yet interpret the Japanese culture aright. For, it is Shinto as a Spiritual Reality which has united the Japanese people into a nation and supplied them with an urge to maintain as well as develop along the lines of their national existence. Again, it is Shinto as a Spiritual Reality which has helped to bring into existence what is called Japanese culture, i.e. religious faith, politics, economics, art, literature, etc.,

furnishing them with forms, characteristics, types, etc. If with all its wonderful tolerance and inclusiveness towards Confucianism, Buddhism and Christianity, Shinto has been successful in retaining its vitality and forcefulness for all these thousands of years, it is not because any grandiose philosophy or complicated ritual (for these are non-existent in the Shinto teachings) has been there to sustain it, but because Shinto has been all these years the most natural and realistic spiritual force pervading all the nooks and corners of the national as well as the individual life of the Japanese, at times controlling, at times vitalizing, but all the time striving to preserve the integrity of the life of the Japanese and their nation. Thus by us Japanese, Shinto has been identified with the 'All-pervading Universal Way' which, if viewed together with its attributes, functions by way of creating all things, giving them forms, characteristics and vitality. Shinto, therefore, can be best described as a 'Creative-formative Principle of Life.' And this Life-Principle which characterizes Shinto could be seen revealed in each and every branch of the Japanese culture, as for instance, in the Japanese code of ethics, in the Japanese family-structure and national structure, and also in the various divisions of the Japanese fine arts, where this all-pervading Shinto principle is predominant in the background. Let us cast a glance at the historical growth of the Japanese nation or at the spiritual growth of the Japanese individual and we cannot fail to find at once the main role of Shinto as a causal factor which has from time to time rejuvenated and reinforced the social and religious life of Japan. One cannot but perceive that in comparison with Shinto the respective roles of Confucianism, Buddhism and Christianity in preserving the line of growth of the Japanese national and individual life have been indeed relative and secondary. In fact, Shinto is the final cause from which has emanated the whole Japanese culture, and the whole Japanese culture finds its best expression in the various walks of the national life of Japan. Thus these three are inalienable from one another, forming merely the components of one complete whole, interacting upon one another, always mutually sustaining and being sustained, always revolving and thus evolving an ever-

growing tree, which is the Japanese nation. This could be better explained when I say that while Shinto admits sharp cleavage between the visible and the invisible, the spiritual and the material, the ideal and the real, this world and the other, and considers this cleavage as unconquerable, it is also inclined to regard this impasse as a dialectic means of self-expression of the one Universal Reality. In short, Shinto urges absolute self-negation on the part of the material in order to sublimate the self into the spiritual, as it equally does the self-negation on the part of the spiritual to find its realization in the material. For, without mutual self-negation, according to Shinto, on the part of both the spiritual and the material, there could not be perfect communion, and without this latter there could not be the self-perpetuating cycle of Life-Universal, which in other words is the 'All-pervading Way of God.' The Shinto term, *Musubi* (Creation, Completion and the Controlling Bond between), the spiritual and the material, the real and the ideal, the invisible and the visible, etc., Shinto admits definitely; but these contradictory phases Shinto regards as mere attributes of the Absolute Universal Self which is beyond the attributes and is never affected by them. According to Shinto, however, these attributes are functional, since it is from them that our conception of Time has come into existence. Rather, these contradictory attributes are like the two ends of the universal pendulum striving incessantly to measure for the humans what remains ever immeasurable, ever illimitable. According to Shinto mythology *Ame-no-mi-naka-nushi* (Heaven-centre-ruling Deity) is this Absolute Universal Self from whom both *Kenkai* (visible) and *Yukai* (invisible) worlds have come into existence through the activities of the three Deities of *Musubi* (Principle of Creation, Completion and the Controlling Bond between).

The system of Shinto, in my opinion, resembles more the system of Hinduism than that of Confucianism or Buddhism (which, as I understand it, is but a phase of Hinduism), with but one difference. To my mind Hinduism represents a system of philosophy which deals more with the 'static' character of Being, while Shinto is ever apt to deal with the 'dynamic' character of the latter. While Hinduism represents a tendency to offer the

widest possible scope of action to the clear and all-piercing intellect of its followers and thus force the Absolute Reality in the pure, Godlike, etherial behaviour, individual as well as communal, of its followers, this insistent care of Shinto for 'behaviour' as a whole has lent to it a synthetic character rather than an analytic one. This also is the reason for its being symbolic in nature instead of descriptive, intuitionist rather than rational. Shinto has all along stuck to its *Koto-agesenu* (non-raising of words) principle, which even today is manifest in the various cultural movements of Japan. It is this same 'insistent care for behaviour' and this same preference to the principle of 'non-raising of words' that has enabled Shinto all this time to keep its own individuality, although it could at the same time find itself best expressed in the fine Confucian ethics of social interaction as well as in the elaborate system of Shinto. It is to be found not in the clear perception of verbal logic but in the self-eloquent behaviouristic logic of clear conduct. The most essential point in the whole system of Shinto is that it does not take a partial view of individual or national life, and, therefore, of 'salvation' of the individual and of the entire life that is indivisibly related to him. This harmonious complex of Life including individuals is what we call '*Kuni-hito*' or 'nation-man.' Contrary to what they do in the West, we are never apt to identify mere individuals in the nation with the nation as a whole. For us, the nation means a harmonious complex of individuals and the given spot where they are providentially placed, and therefore, 'salvation' for us means the 'salvation' of the whole nation instead of 'salvation' of a few individuals. Thus Shinto neither sacrifices a few for the whole, nor does it neglect the whole, nor the whole for its parts. Instead, it aims at the self-perpetuating cycle of the complete whole, revolving and evolving, thus safeguarding the healthy and harmonious growth of the entire nation-tree. This indivisibility between individuals and nation, it should be noted, is not of a bio-organic nature. Shinto does not admit this kind of view. Instead, its nature is likened to that of the relation between a microcosm and a macrocosm, and therefore, it is of an astronomic nature. *Kuni-hito*, which literally means 'nation-man', includes,

without hurting any, innumerable individual microcosms within itself while enjoying an independent macrocosmic life of its own, and the same turns naturally into a microcosm when viewed in terms of the world, which, then is supposed to enjoy an independent and macrocosmic life. In this way, the astronomical order which starts from individual microcosm and expanding respectively through family, nation and world macrocosms grows into the greatest macrocosm including several worlds, is what Shinto means by *Kami* or God. Therefore, all the lesser macrocosms which *Kami* includes are supposed to enjoy a harmonious existence in accordance with the 'Way of God'. Even the smallest individual is also considered, according to Shinto, to be a lesser microcosm enjoying, under the aegis of the way of 'Kami' or the greatest macrocosm, a perfect existence. The self-revelation of this great 'way or Kami' is what is again, according to Shinto, the all-enlightening forces of Intelligence, or the all-harmonizing forces of Love, or the all-creative forces of Will, and the harmonious interaction of these three is supposed to be the pre-requisite for the orderly growth of all things. These three are symbolized in Shinto theology by mirror, jewel and sword respectively, which latter three are considered to be the most holy regalia of our Tenno (Sovereign Emperor) who is the direct descendant of Amaterasu-Omikani (All-Heaven Shining Great Goddess). They are, again, supposed to symbolize the dynamic working of the Great Way and as such they are to be found in the fore-front of every Shinto shrine, commonly known as *Mitsu-tomo-e* or the 'three huge commas'. All things that receive enlightenment according to the self-revealing process of this all-pervading Great Way are believed to be Deities, whether they be individuals, ancestors, plants or animals. To Westerners who cannot overcome the distinction between 'matter' and 'spirit,' this may seem as merely a primitive way of worshipping Nature, but in that, I am sure they are greatly mistaken. Therefore, Shinto, instead of being a kind of pantheism (in that it places theistic value in every being), is a kind of personal religion which, while ascribing divine attributes to every being, does not fail to admit difference in levels, distinctions and individualities. The historical revelation

of Shinto or the All-pervading Universal Way is to be seen in the great structure of Japan's national life which rests upon the stout beams embodied in the principle of *Sai-sei-itchi* meaning 'indivisibility of religion and politics, politics and *etchi* and religion and economics.' In other words, absolute loyalty to Tenno or Sovereign Emperor, deep feeling of piety towards the parents, respect for the ancestors and love for children—these four concepts constitute the main structure of the Great Universal Way. Self-realization, according to this Great Universal Way or Shinto, means, to put it finally, the dynamic and cyclic process of mutual interaction of two forces, one of which is represented by the individual or the smallest microcosm which through self-negation is constantly reborn into a greater and ever greater macrocosm represented by family, nation, the world and *Kami* respectively, and the latter, that is the other of the two forces, also through self-negation, reincarnates itself into lesser and lesser microcosms, i.e. the world, nation, family and individuals respectively. Thus, the constant interplay of rebirth and reincarnation of lesser microcosms and greater macrocosms becomes absolutely necessary, according to Shinto, for the orderly growth and preservation of the whole universe. And the principles of '*Hojinism*' or 'the absolute oneness of Land and Man' and the ideal of 'Faith International' for which the Nippon Cultural Federation stands are but mere modernized terms for Shinto philosophy.

THE TEACHINGS OF HEBREW PROPHETS

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CREATION

In the beginning God created the heaven and earth. The waters were created much before, as it is explained in the scriptures that the spirit of God was hovering on the face of the waters, though the scriptures have not disclosed when the waters were created.

The heaven and earth were created from Fire and Water.

You must admit that the text teaches that God (as Judge) created the heaven and earth. The Lord (the Merciful One) created the world in mercy, because though at first He intended to create the world to be placed under the rule of strict justice, yet He realized that the world could not thus endure and therefore gave precedence to Divine Mercy allying it with Divine Justice. It is to this that what is written in *Genesis* (xi. 4) alludes.

Now God said, "*We will create man.*" Meek was the Holy One—blessed be He—because man is in the likeness of the angels and they might envy him, He took counsel with them (*Genesis*). And when He judges the Kings He likewise consults His heavenly council, for thus we find in the case of Ahab.

So God consulted His heavenly Council and asked permission of them, saying to them, "There are in the Heaven beings after My likeness; if there will not be in earth also beings after My likeness, there will be envy among the beings that I have created." Although the angels did not assist Him in forming the man, and although this use of the plural may give the heretics an occasion to rebel (*i.e.* to argue in favour of their own views), yet the verse does not refrain from teaching proper conduct and the virtue of humbleness, that the greater should consult and take permission from the smaller. For, had it been written, "I shall make man," we could then have learnt that He spoke not to His Judicial Council, but to Himself. And as a refutation of heretics, it is written immediately after this verse, "And God created the man. And they shall have dominion over the fish (and the beasts)." The Scripture places cattle and beasts on a level with human beings; that is to say, it places all alike in the same category with regard to food, and did not permit Adam to kill any creature and eat its flesh, but all alike were to eat herbs. But when the era of the sons of Noah began, He permitted them to eat meat, for it is said (*Gen.*, ix. 3), "Every moving thing that lives should be for food for yourselves even as the herbs that I permitted to the first man."

God had created Adam on the sixth day and given him the charge of the animals.

Adam had three children, viz. Kain, Abel and Sheth. Kain killed Abel, and the descendants of Kain were drowned in the flood. The descendants of Sheth are all the humanity of the world.

God had created the world for His Glory ; as His name is being praised in Heaven, so His name is to be praised on earth.

The book of *Song of Songs* tells us that the *Shekinah* (God) descended to earth, which is explained in the *Zohar Teruma* thus:—

We have been told that at the revelation on Mount Sinai, when the *Torah* was given in ten words, each word became a voice, and every voice was divided into seventy voices, all of which shone and sparkled before the eyes of all Israel, so that they saw eye to eye the splendour of His Glory, as it is written, " And all the people saw the voices " (*Ex.*, xx. 18).. The voice warned each individual Israelite, saying, " Wilt thou accept me with all the command implicit in me?" To this the reply came, " Yes!" Then the voice circled round his head once more, asking, " Wilt thou accept me with all penalties attached to me in Law?" And again he answered " Yes!" Then the voice turned and kissed him on the mouth, as it is written, " Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." The Israelites have taken an oath to be the trustee to receive the *Torah*, the Ten Commandments on behalf of themselves and for the World.

Man is the pattern of supernal glory. The fact is that the Holy One created man in this world after the pattern of the supernal Glory above. This supernal glory expands itself into spirit and soul after soul, until it reaches a region which is called " Body " and into this " Body " the spirit from the Fountain of Life enters what is called " *All* " for all the good and all the satisfaction and nourishment of the " Body " are in it.

TORAH IS THE PLAN OF GOD

He looked into His plan and, although in a sense, it was the plan which brought the palace into being, it is not called by its name, but by that of the King.

The *Torah* (Law) proclaims, " I was by Him an architect,

through me He created the world!" For the *Torah* preceded the creation of the world by 2000 years and so, when He resolved to create the world He looked into the *Torah* into every creative word, and fashioned the world correspondingly; for all the words and all the actions of all the worlds are contained.

The *Torah* (Law) as given to Moses, the Prophet, consists of 613 commandments, which are the essence of the supernal and terrestrial mysteries, and which include the essence of the masculine world above, and of the feminine world below.

And all these commandments are limbs and members in which the mystery of the faith is comprised.

He who does not endeavour to enter into the hidden meaning of the commandments knows not and has not considered the manner in which the members of the body are organized in the supernal mystery. Although some limbs and members are more important than others, yet a man in whom even the best of them is broken suffers from a disfigurement. How much greater a disfigurement it is, when even one of the commandments is broken! Such an act causes, as it were, a blemish in a supernal region.

In this connection it is written, "And the Lord God took Adam and put him into the garden of Eden to till it and to keep it" (*Gen.*, xi. 15). *To till it* refers to the 248 upper organs, the positive commandments; *and to keep it* to the 365 lower organs, the negative commandments.

The former belongs to the category of "remember," while the latter belongs to that of "keep," and both are one.

Blessed is he who is worthy to fulfil them. Through this law he is enabled to possess both the worlds.

Now God had created humanity according to Himself and the *Torah*, which explains thus:—

The *Zohar* explains that God has given to humanity *Romah aebaro*, viz. 248 bones to humanity, which works according to 248 parts of the Law, and *shissha Gido*, viz. 365 nerves of the human body. These two total to 613 counsels given to the human body.

We have been taught from the Jewish Scriptures that the Holy One—blessed be He—gave 613 counsels unto man in order that he might be perfect in attachment to his Lord, for the Holy King desires only his good both in this world and in the world to come, but more especially in the world to come, since whatever good the Holy One bestows upon man in this world is taken from the sum of good which he is entitled to receive in the world to come.

Because as we have been taught, the world to come is, as it were, God's own possession.

This is not to say, of course, that this present world is not His also, but as it has been said, 'it is like unto an ante-chamber in comparison with the hall itself and the reward of a truly good man is taken from that which is God's own.

The Zohar Waera says that, as a result of a proper knowledge of God as Creator and Lord, the 248 organs (bones) of the human body become the organs of 248 positive commandments of the Law, and man's life becomes something complete and harmonious, and the particular individual knowledge of God causes salvation and blessings to enter into everyone of the 365 days of the year corresponding to 365 negative 'commandments.

The *Torah* (Law) signifies divine revelation, either the fact of communion between God and man, or the wisdom so imparted.

Though the *Torah* was given to Israel, yet Israel was representative of humanity under the oath taken at Mount Sinai.

Intercourse between God and man is fundamental and without it, human life is above the merely animal stage.

Rabbi Akiba (Jewish Saint) once wished to tell his pupils how short life really is, and that it is only given to us on loan to use to the best possible advantage. He said, "Everything is given to man on pledge, and the net (of death) is cast over the living."

The shop is opened. The dealer (the Lord of all the world) gives credit (for rewards or punishments do not immediately follow our actions). Then the ledger is opened, the hand writes, and whosoever wishes to borrow comes and borrows.

The bailiffs (the angels who allot rewards and punishments, happiness and sufferings) go round continually every day, and demand payment from every man, whether he be content or not. The judgment is a just judgment, and everything is prepared for the banquet of Heaven. For even a wicked has a share in the world to come after repentance.

REPENTANCE

- (1) Happy the man who repents in the strength of his manhood.
- (2) The end and aim of all wisdom is repentance and good deeds (works).
- (3) As the ocean never freezes, so the gates of repentance never close.
- (4) So great is the virtue of repentance that it prolongs a man's years.
- (5) The tears of true penitence are not shed in vain.
- (6) Even the most righteous shall not attain to so high a place in heaven as the truly repentant.
- (7) One hour employed in this world in the exercise of repentance and good deeds is preferable to a whole life in the world to come.
- (8) Repent one day before thy death.

As soon as Israel separates herself from the *Torah* (Law), the attribute of justice comes forth to bathe in the blood of Israel. Because of the neglect of the *Torah*, said Rabbi Judah (Jewish saint), "Man's fate depends in the last resort upon repentance and prayer, and especially prayer with tears, for there is no gate which tears cannot penetrate." The Jews always pray in the feast of tabernacle in four vegetable species belonging to the vegetable kingdom; those which we use on the *Succoth feast* (tabernacle) are designed to remind us of the four elements of nature which work under the direction and approval of the most high.

The first species is the tree known as *hadar* (the citron). Its colour is high yellow and resembles fire.

The second species is the palm branch (lulab), a high tree, growing up straight in the air, whose fruit is sweet and delicious to taste—and this represents the second element, *air*.

The third is the bow of the myrtle, one of the lowliest of trees, growing close to the ground. It is cold and dry as earth, and fittingly represents the element *earth*.

The fourth is the willow of the brook, which grows in perfection close beside the water, dropping its branches into the stream, and symbolizing thus the last element, *water*.

The Bible teaches us that for each of these four elements we especially thank God. May the Creator of the above four elements, who is our Father, help you!

When the Israelites were coming out of Egypt, Moses the Prophet accepted the gentiles, who were ten times the number of the Israelites. God had warned Moses not to accept the Eremites, but Moses appealed to God saying, "The Divine of the universe! These are also your children and since they have seen your power, and know you, why should you not allow them to join the Israelites, whom you have created with the alphabet '*He*,' which is mercy, O Merciful God." And Moses the Prophet was permitted to accept them, which is another instance showing that all humanity are considered as his children, and there should be love, as they are our brothers and sisters. In the words of Rabbi Hillel, the author of *Babylonian Talmud*—"Love thy neighbour as thyself, which is the essence of Religion."

Every faith is a path to God, and without love of humanity, the World will come to chaos.

Abraham the Prophet was the first person who has revealed God to all humanity. "And God brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be." (*Gen.*, xv. 5). In *Genesis*, chapter xvii, we have the following:—

"And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly.

" And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him saying:

" As for me behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

" Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many Nations have I made thee.

" And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

" And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."

" And God said unto Abraham, as for Sarai, thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

" And I will bless her and give thee a son also of her yea, I will bless her, and she shall be mother of nations and kings of people shall be of her."

In Chapter xiii of Genesis it is said—

" God told Abraham, for all the land which thou seest, to thee, I will give it, and to thy seed for ever.

" And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered."

In Chapter xiv is written—

" And Melchizedek, King of Salem brought forth bread and wine and he was the Priest of the most high God.

" And God blessed Abraham of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth."

Abraham had two sons, one from Sarah, and one from Hagar, the Egyptian woman, viz. Isaac and Ishmael, who are the fathers of Jews and Mohammedans respectively. Besides he had another four sons from Keturah who were the parents of all castes now existing.

Isaac had two sons, viz. Essau and Jacob, and their descendants are the Christians and Jews respectively.

Now coming further, Jacob had twelve children, viz. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issakhar, Zebuloon, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Joseph and Benjamin. These are the parents of different peoples as shown below:—

- (1) *Reuben*: The descendants are the Brahmins of India.
- (2) *Simeon*: The descendants are scattered in certain parts of India.
- (3) *Levi*: The descendants are the parents of the Prophets Aaron and Moses, and of the Prophetess Miriam or Mary.
- (4) *Judah*: The descendants are the tribe which had King David, King of Israel and author of the *Psalms* read by both the Jews and the Christians.
- (5) *Issakhar*: The descendants are the Kashmiris of India.
- (6) *Zebuloon*: The descendants are in Central Europe.
- (7) *Dan*: The Danes are the descendants.
- (8) *Naphtali*: The Scotch people are the descendants.
- (9) *Gad*: This was the parent of the well-known Buddhists of today, and this is mentioned by a well-known author in Japan, proving that the Japanese are the descendants of Gad, the son of Jacob our Father. Even they wish one another as Mi-gad as mentioned by Cheiro, the late astrologer.
- (10) *Asher*: Cheiro has also proved that the Chinese, the followers of the Buddhist religion are all descendants of Asher.
- (11) *Joseph*: He was king in Egypt, and in the words of Cheiro his descendants are as—
 - (i) Manesseh, who is the father of United States of America,
 - (ii) Ephraim, whose descendants today are the British.
- (12) *Benjamin*: He is the father of the Afghans, who resemble the Jews.

Those who think of the humanity of today, will immediately discover that all people are brothers and sisters. They should love one another and should give up all hatred. When the Messiah will come, they all will be gathered from all parts of the world as the children of *Sheth*, the third son of *Adam*.

THE RELIGION OF THE DEV SAMAJ

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THE FOUR TESTS

The Deva Dharma or the religion of the Dev Samaj, as discovered and taught by the most worshipful Bhagavān Dev Ātma, Founder of the Dev Samaj, is the only science-grounded religion. It is so, because of its being based upon the facts and laws of Nature. It stands the following four tests or criteria which give to any other scientific knowledge the seal of truth:

(1) That the knowledge in question should relate to any existence in *Nature* which is composed of all matter in its subtlest and grossest forms and all force in all its phases whether living or non-living, visible or non-visible, whenever and wherever existing in space and time.

(2) That the knowledge in question should be consistent with the direct knowledge acquired by man by means of his (i) various sense-organs or preliminary consciousnesses such as sense of sight, smell, hearing, etc., (ii) intellectual powers, (iii) powers or consciousnesses of 'I' or ego, (iv) lower kind of feelings, namely, love of money, love of sexual enjoyment, etc., (v) various kinds of aesthetic senses, such as sense of beauty, sense of music, sense of order, sense of tidiness or cleanliness etc., (vi) various altruistic feelings based upon justice, (vii) altruistic feelings of reverence, gratitude, disinterested service of others etc., (viii) *Deva Saktis* or the highest psychic powers, i.e. all-sided or complete love of truth, all-sided or complete love of goodness, all-sided or complete hatred for

untruth or falsehood, and complete or all-sided hatred for wrong or evil.

(3) That the knowledge in question should be in accord with the fundamental principles of logical reasoning. Anything which is inconsistent with logic is not true.

(4) That the knowledge in question should be in harmony with the immutable processes or laws of Nature which are working in it and bring about changes in all kingdoms or existences in Nature. Anything which is not in harmony with these laws is untrue.

The religion of the Dev Samaj amply fulfils the above four conditions and stands the test. It is, therefore, the only science-grounded Religion.

THE EIGHT TRUTHS ABOUT NATURE

As the religion of the Dev Samaj believes in Nature as the only true reality, and as man (both his body and soul) is a part of Nature, it is essential that he should know some truths about Nature, before he can have correct knowledge about the true *dharma*. We give here some main and basic principles believed by and taught in the Dev Samaj about Nature:—

(a) *Conception of Nature and its Components.* Nature is one complete existence or indivisible whole, which, as stated above, comprises of all matter and all force.

There is nothing in Nature that really exists and yet that is not made up of matter—gross or fine, and force whether living or non-living. In fact, they are the components of Nature and of every existence in it. It therefore follows inevitably that we cannot know, accept or believe in the existence of anything that is not composed of matter and force in any form and which may be stated to be outside or beyond Nature. Hence, as a matter of fact, all such existences as are supposed to be beyond or outside Nature are mere delusions.

(b) *Eternity of Nature and its self-existence.* The Dev Samaj believes that these two components of everything that we know

of or can think of (i.e. matter and force) only change their forms or phases but are never destroyed altogether, i.e. they never become totally extinct. Thus the sum-total of all matter and all force is always constant, i.e. it has been in the past what it is today, and shall always remain the same in the future. Hence the whole Nature which is made up of them is eternal or self-existing.

(c) *The Mutual Relation of Matter and Force.* These two eternal components of Nature—matter and force—are so indissolubly connected with each other by their inherent nature, that none of them has ever been proved to exist quite apart from or independent of the other. Matter is never found void of force and force is never found apart from some sort of matter. Hence, they could never have existed separately before too. And there could arise no necessity of their being joined together by any supposed supernatural entity.

Force in nature has the inherent quality of motion and is ceaselessly changing the forms of matter and is also changing itself by its own motion. These changes in matter and force are termed as transformations.

By ceaseless and eternal action of force upon matter and by its own transformation, various forms of non-living and living beings have been appearing and disappearing in Nature from eternity. This process is going on now and will go on for eternity. Nature thus admits of no creator or maker and the Dev Samaj believes in no such Creator or Maker.

(d) *Conception of Laws of Nature and their Eternity.* While the whole Nature is unceasingly changing, every change in its part takes place by certain fixed methods, i.e. under certain fixed conditions certain results always follow, or in other words, certain causes always produce certain effects. This relation of cause and effect is reciprocal and this unalterable sequence of cause and effect is an inherent process or method of change in Nature, hence it is called a law of Nature. As Nature is eternal, the laws of Nature are also eternal. The so-called miracles which are inconsistent with the laws of Nature are mere delusions.

(e) *The Universal Law of Change or Variation.* The great law of Nature that governs all living and non-living beings is the law of change or variation. Under this eternal and universal law of change, everything in Nature changes, i.e. it does not remain exactly the same as regards its form, function and quality. This variation may not be perceptible to us at times, when, it is very slow, but it becomes perceptible in course of time when it accumulates. However, under the unceasing motion of force unceasing change is inevitable whether perceptible to our naked eye or not.

(f) *Evolution and Devolution.* The change that makes an existence better in its form, functions or qualities is called the higher, upward, progressive or evolutionary development of that existence. And the change by which any existence degenerates, or becomes worse as regards its forms, functions and qualities, is called a downward or degenerating one. If the latter change continues in any existence, it brings about the complete dissolution of that existence as regards its form and qualities.

The process of evolution in Nature brings about a gradual change towards betterment in its various parts, and thus from the diffused and disorganized substance—matter and force—called nebula, organized worlds are evolved as has been the case with our solar system, and from non-living or inorganic forces, organic living forces of different kinds are evolved producing thereby innumerable living existences of various kinds in the vegetable, animal and human kingdoms.

(g) *The opposite consequences of evolution and devolution.* The evolutionary process in Nature leads to more and more of higher harmony or adjustment in mis-adjusted mutual relations of the non-living and living worlds or beings that are capable of change for the better, thus bringing about the highest good for all. This evolution, however, is not in a straight line.

The process of devolution or degeneration in Nature leads to the reverse results, i.e. it brings about in the non-living and living beings that become incapable of upward or higher change their gradual degradation or degeneration and ultimately obliterates them out of existence as entities.

(h) *Man is also subject to evolution and devolution.* Man being a part of Nature is closely related to its other parts and is always surrounded by them. The parts of Nature which surround or affect man or any sub-human existence constitute his or its environments. No man or sub-human existence can be immune from the effects or influences of the environments. Those environments which bring about a change for the better in the body or soul of man are called his favourable environments, and those which influence him to change for the worse in body or soul or both are called his unfavourable environments. Hence, the more a man is fit to adapt himself to the influence of his favourable environments and to resist the influences of unfavourable environments, the better, the more powerful, the more beautiful and the more useful he becomes thereby. Reverse is the case when he is not able to adapt himself to the favourable environments and is unfit to resist the influences of the unfavourable environments, for, in that case he becomes worse, weaker, more ugly, more harmful and more misadjusted than before and thereby gets deteriorated or degraded.

These are the eight truths about Nature on which the teachings of Deva Dharma are based. The question may be asked that if the Deva Dharma has no place for any supernatural being, what does it then deal with? The Deva Dharma deals with the science of the soul or life-force of man. It teaches four great truths with regard to the soul.

FOUR GREAT TRUTHS ABOUT SOUL

1. *What is soul?* The soul of man is an organized life-force in Nature which has the property of building man's living material body for its habitation and use, and without which his living body could not be produced or maintained. This organized life-force is the real self or soul of man. It constitutes the most essential part in the being of man. This organized life-force or soul not only builds but preserves and moves its body and keeps it living. This organized life-force or soul of man is therefore not the effect but the true cause of man's living body.

This soul of man along with his organized living body has

gradually evolved in millions of years from the non-living force and non-living matter of Nature. The individual human soul begins its career for the first time in the womb of a woman, after her ovum is penetrated by man's sperm under certain conditions. This new life-force is the infant soul, which commences the work of building or constructing its living human body from the material it gets from the mother's blood. When it comes out of the womb safe and sound, it continues the work of developing its body including its brain. It also develops its emotional and mental powers and in time becomes conscious of its own individual being or entity.

2. *Soul's relation with its body in this world and hereafter.* Since force and matter are never found quite apart from each other in nature, the organized life-power or soul of man has a very close and intimate connection with its bodily organism. Just as the human body dies when the soul leaves it off, so the soul of man is not only unable to feel, to think or to do anything without any organized living body,—gross or fine—but it loses its individuality altogether and becomes extinct, if it fails to build or have any organized body.

The soul is enabled to build its body by its constructive power which is by far the most important of all its powers as when it loses this power, it totally loses its individuality. This constructive power of the soul gets weaker by its slavery to several pleasures or harmful actions and grows stronger by unselfish service to others. This constructive power on becoming sufficiently strong begins to make relatively lighter or more refined cells from the gross living cells which it makes daily for the upkeep of its earthly living body. At the death of this earthly body, if no mishap occurs, the soul of man, out of the refined cells drawn from its earthly body, forms, by means of its constructive power, a new but subtle living body of nearly the same type and shape, and begins its conscious life as before. This subtle-bodied soul remains on or near this earth, if its new body is too dense or gross to reach and live in the refined earth called *Paraloka*. Such earth-bound subtle bodied souls are those who lead very sinful lives on this earth. Hence, they remain very miserable and if no

better change takes place in their lives, they go on losing their constructive power and after suffering a lot of miseries, become extinct as separate entities. On the other hand, the soul of a man who lives a life of other-worldliness, builds a better or more refined subtle body, and is thus able to go and live in any region of the subtle earth or *Paraloka*, for which he has developed his fitness. Thus the higher the condition of man's soul, the higher is the region it attains in the *Paraloka* after the death of its earthly body.

3. *The origin of sin and suffering.* Every human soul becomes diseased and degraded when it goes against the cosmic law of evolution or betterment. Being a part of nature man's soul is closely related to other parts of Nature—human and sub-human. Hence, if moved by its higher feelings, it thinks, feels and acts in such a way as to contribute towards the betterment of these parts, and it thus fulfils the law of evolution, and evolves thereby in its own constitution, and develops its constructive power. On the contrary, if it proves unduly harmful to them, it goes counter to the law of evolution and suffers various kinds of woeful consequences in relation to itself and produces similar consequences in relation to others.

Various kinds of feelings which degrade the soul of man and lead him to wrong, evil and harmful thoughts and actions in relation to his own being and in relation to others, have their basis in the gratification of his various low pleasures. For instance:—

1. The bodily pleasure-giving low love of taste, intoxication, sloth and lust.
2. The egoistic pleasure-giving low love of fame, honour and power, praise and selfishness.
3. Low pleasure-giving love of offspring or children.
4. Low pleasure-giving love of acquisitions, money, property, etc.
5. Low pleasure-giving love of traditions, companions, habits, etc.

6. Low pleasure-giving love of *himsā*, or unnecessarily teasing, annoying or troubling other animals or men.

7. Low pleasure-giving love of false or blind faith.

8. Low pleasure-giving hate of various kinds such as jealousy, vindictiveness and revenge, and religious, communal or racial prejudice.

These are all called low loves and low hates because slavery to them makes the soul diseased and degraded.

This slavery further produces such woeful consequences for man as the following:—

(i) He becomes hard-hearted and thus becomes unable to see the truths regarding his soul-life; (ii) he gets perverted in vision to such an extent that he considers evil life as good and good life as evil, the enemy of his being as friend and the friend of his being as his enemy, the false religious beliefs as true and the true religious faith as false, etc.; (iii) he loses whatever capacity he has for getting true freedom from low loves and low hates and for higher evolution in altruistic forces of soul; and (iv) he destroys his constructive power altogether. Besides this he undergoes various kinds of pains, afflictions, griefs and losses both of body and mind in this world and the world hereafter.

4. *The supreme goal of man is true salvation and true evolution in higher life.* Hence the true goal of man wishing to preserve and evolve his life is not the attainment of pleasure or happiness here or hereafter, but to get (i) true knowledge and consciousness about the organism of his soul, its diseases, their true causes, and true salvation therefrom, and its true evolution in higher life; and (ii) true higher or life-promoting environments which may help him to obtain true salvation from his soul-degrading diseases and their causes, and true soul-evolution in higher or altruistic feelings of forces of soul.

The true salvation of man lies in the attainment of real freedom by him from (i) all his false, wrong, evil and sinful thoughts beliefs and acts prompted by his pleasure-affording low loves and low hates, and all his slavery to such loves and hates themselves; and (ii) all his previous soul-impurities accumulated in his soul

by such evil thoughts and acts through proper retribution. The true evolution of man's soul lies in the growth and evolution in it of the higher or altruistic powers which lead him to the unselfish service for the betterment of other existences of Nature.

According to the immutable laws of Nature a fit soul, in so far as he possesses the real capacity, can get such true salvation and such true evolution in higher soul-life when he is able to get the true essential things, i.e.

(a) The highest psychic light (*deva jyotis*) that can enlighten him as regards the really harmful and horrible nature and consequences of his wrong and evil thoughts and acts and of his low loves and low hates which produce them, the true nature of soul-organism, its diseases and the true way of getting freedom therefrom as well as the true beauty and the blessedness of the higher or the altruistic powers that constitute it and the true way for attainment of and evolution in them.

(b) The highest psychic power (*deva tejas*) which can create in him true repulsion and pain for his wrong and evil thoughts and acts and his slavery to low loves and low hates instead of his previous attraction for them, evolve all those altruistic feelings and higher loves that he lacks for the upbuilding of true higher life of his soul.

This unique highest psychic light and this unique highest psychic power have developed in Bhagavān Dev Ātma, the most worshipful founder of the Dev Samaj, teacher and highest embodiment of Deva Dharma, as a result of the evolution in his soul, of those unique psychic powers which he inherited in their germ state in the process of evolution. These unique psychic powers are—(a) The complete or all-sided love for all that is true in all relations, (b) the complete or all-sided hatred for all kinds of falsehoods and untruth in all relations, (c) the complete and all-sided love for all that is good and beneficial in all relations and (d) the complete and all-sided hatred for all that is wrong, evil or unjust in all relations. By the evolution of these highest psychic powers Bhagavān Dev Ātma has become a spiritual sun for the whole human world, emitting the above kind of unique

psychic light and unique psychic power. By the evolution of these unique psychic powers he has risen to be the teacher of the one true science-grounded religion for all mankind and is the complete and all-sided benefactor of human life and sub-human worlds as is evident from the unique history of his evolution and the unique achievements of his life given in details in his own various publications.

THE UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENTS

The Dev Samaj was established in February, 1887 by Bhagavān Dev Ātma for being serviceable in his unique mission of giving true freedom here on this earth to all fit souls not only from their false faiths, false rituals, evil habits, sins and crimes, but from the slavery of all low loves and low hates which are the root cause of them all, and to develop in them here on this earth higher and altruistic feelings so as to make them really useful and serviceable in all their relations ; in the fulfilment of this grand mission lies the highest good of the human and sub-human kingdoms. Hence before the Dev Samaj admits anyone to its membership, even of the lowest grades, it enables him to give up and refrain from the eight specified sins regarding which he takes the following pledges:—

1. I shall not take myself or give, or cause to be given to others any intoxicant, such as wine, opium, bhang, tobacco, *charas*, *chandu*, cocaine, etc. except on medical grounds.
2. I shall not eat myself or give, or cause to be given to others for eating flesh or eggs or anything made of them.
3. I shall not gamble, or be helpful to others in such an act.
4. I shall not steal anything of others, or help others in committing theft.
5. I shall not take bribe in the performance of my legitimate duties to others.
6. I shall not withhold any money or any other thing entrusted to me as deposit ; I shall not suppress payment of any donation promised by me towards a beneficent cause, nor withhold anything or debt borrowed by me from any body, when I

am able to pay or return it ; I shall not suppress payment of the price of anything purchased by me.

7. I shall not commit adultery, or help others in doing so, or remarry in the life-time of my wife or husband.

8. I shall not knowingly kill any sentient being without any proper reason for doing so, i.e. when one is obliged to use the right of defence of himself or his relations, or property, etc.

Hundreds of persons are thus being rescued from these sins. There are hundreds of cases which have happened so far and are happening now, in which the sinners have made amends for their past wrongs. Those who had obtained money, property or any other thing by dishonest means have not only confessed their guilt to the wronged persons, but have returned thousands of rupees to them with penitent hearts. In several cases, even after the death of the wronged persons, they have paid the amount to their heirs. In cases, where the trace of the wronged persons could not be found, the ill-gotten money has been given to some charitable cause for the welfare of the soul of the wronged person. In some cases, the sons have paid the dishonestly gained moneys of their departed fathers or even fathers-in-law.

Again, some who had been guilty of sexual misconduct or had inflicted any bodily injury on others or had wounded the hearts of others and created various kinds of misery for others by their wrong acts, have felt repentance for such misdeeds and made due reparations in one way or another.

Further, some men who had done great wrong to the animal world by killing animals for the pleasure of sport or for eating their flesh, after repenting these wrong acts, have made reparation by serving their kind in different ways.

The most wonderful of all changes that is being wrought in the life of scores of fit persons is that they are beginning to realize the life of selfishness as an ugly life and the life of unselfish service as the positively useful life. Hence, many persons in the Dev Samaj are devoting part of their time or the whole of their life in the service of others.

UNIQUE DISCIPLINES (SĀDHANĀS)

With a view to enlightening fit souls as to their (a) different kinds of duties and (b) wrong feelings and acts in various relations on the basis of the higher feelings of other-worldliness, the Dev Ātma has given numerous commandments in detail in all these relations in part IV of his monumental work, the *Deva Śāstra*. The whole year is divided into sixteen periods, and each period is set apart for the special observance of religious exercises in one or the other of the following relations of in order to be more and more serviceable and less and less harmful in them:—

In relation to human world: In relation to—(1) parents and children, (2) brothers and sisters, (3) husband and wife, (4) master and servant, (5) the Dev Samaj, (6) one's country, (7) one's own tribe or lineage, (8) one's own being, (9) one's own nation or race, (10) the departed ones, (11) the fellow members of the Dev Samaj, (12) humanity at large, and (13) Bhagavān Dev Ātma.

In relation to sub-human worlds: In relation to—(1) the animal world, (2) the vegetable world, (3) the inanimate objects or non-living world.

By performance of these religious exercises, an attempt is made to lead man, as far as he is capable, towards the grand ideal of Harmony on the basis of higher feelings, with the higher or evolutionary course of Nature, which the Dev Ātma has disclosed to the world, and which he had realized in his own unique soul.

Thus by developing a feeling or sense of regularity, method, sincerity, exactness, responsibility and devotion to duty, faithfulness for higher principles of life, toleration and respect for the rights of others, forbearance, courage, self-respect, self-help, self-confidence, self-restraint, discipline etc., higher character is being built and thereby a new era of higher peace and concord is being evolved between good parents and good children, good husbands and good wives, good brothers and good sisters, good masters and good servants, good citizens and true patriots, and well-wishers of all human and other living and non-living beings.

The whole world, which is at present on the verge of a very dreadful war even in this civilized age among the most enlightened

and advanced nations, and especially our mother country, are very pathetically crying for the advent of such renovating and regenerating true *Dharma* and we are sure that, in course of time, its cause is bound to be taken up by all sensible and good men and women.

THEOSOPHY OR BRAHMAVIDYĀ

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The name 'Theosophy' is derived from the Greek term *Theosophia* which literally means *Brahmavidyā* or Divine Wisdom. This Divine Wisdom is all-inclusive and is the source of all knowledge, and the epithet *Sarva-vidyā-pratishṭhā* (container of all wisdom), used in the *Muṇḍaka Upanishad* (I. i. 1) is very significant. It includes the ordinary knowledge of phenomena, *aparā-vidyā* (lower knowledge) and *Parāvidyā* (higher knowledge) which is attained by the mystic realization of the Ultimate Principle.

All that we find embodied in sciences, philosophies, histories, grammar, mathematics, the Vedas, Purāṇas etc., constitute the *aparā* or lesser knowledge, while the *Parā* or higher knowledge is attained subjectively by deep meditation (*samādhi*) as a direct realization by mystics (*Ibid.*, I. i. 4, 5).

Again, in the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* (vii. i. 2) we find that Nārada enumerated the subjects studied by him when he approached Maharshi Sanatkumāra for direction to attain *Parāvidyā*. This list includes all the subjects that we know or can think of, which then constitute *aparāvidyā*. This Theosophy or *Brahmavidyā* is eternal, absolute and ancient and is maintained by a hierarchy of adepts. But it is to be proclaimed and re-proclaimed in different ages in different languages to suit the mentality of the people. Theosophy is thus the ancient *Brahmavidyā* re-proclaimed in a modern way and in a modern language. It is the old wine in a new bottle.

The necessity for re-proclamation has arisen from the conditions that have been existing for some time amongst the different nations and the faiths of the modern world. The followers of any particular creed and culture among the different creeds and cultures now existing, have been emphatically asserting that their religion is the only true one, while all other religions are false. Thus religion has now become the cause of separation and quarrel instead of co-operation and friendship between man and man and nation and nation, and it is no longer the binding principle but a separating factor. Some students of Comparative Mythology say that these religions have all evolved with the evolution and growth of mentality and the development of man as an organism, and they classify religions into three groups, viz. (1) those arising out of fear, (2) those arising from the social sense, and (3) those arising from the religious sense in man. (1) When men were in their primitive mental condition and could not attribute any cause to the catastrophic natural changes to which they were subjected or to the sudden appearance of epidemic diseases, they thought them to be due to the existence of some superhuman beings of great power and capacity. They began to worship them in a form of ceremonials and rituals in order that their wrath might be appeased, and these rituals formed their religion. (2) With the growth of social feeling amongst them they appreciated more and more the love, guidance and protection that they received from their fathers and leaders, and they attributed these qualifications anthropomorphically to their God and worshipped Him as a comforter in sorrow, as one granting boons and as preserver of the souls of the dead. These two types of religions are anthropomorphic in character. (3) Then there is the third type developed from the true inner religious feeling. This view of the evolution of religions is not supported by the history of religion and culture.

We find that at the back of every religion and culture developed in and through a nation, there is a great being, a prophet or sage or seer. It is he who has given the special type of culture and special aspect of religion suited to the nation and to the age. Religion was in its pure state when it was given by the seer, but it had a gradual degradation or involution in the hands of the

followers of the second, third or fourth generation who were not necessarily seers themselves and for whom the original principles in the religion became articles of faith and not a part of their being. These disciples imposed on the religion their own minds, and many customs and habits developed in the nation were imposed upon the religion forming as if a crust on it. For instance "Love thy neighbour" is an article of faith for an ordinary person, but for a seer it is a part of his being, for he feels his unity with his neighbour. So the religion loses its pristine purity, and a crust of tradition, superstition and meaningless customs and habits is formed. The prophets who founded these religions gave the esoteric part or the mystic discipline to a select few, but an exoteric cult of rituals and ceremonials to common people. This mysticism in these religions is lost in many cases as also the inner meaning of the symbols and ceremonies. We know there were mystic practices in the oracles in Greece, lesser mysteries and greater mysteries in Egypt, and also mysteries amongst the early Christians. These are mostly lost or their meaning forgotten generally. A few there are even now in every religion, who follow the path of mysticism—some the mysticism of grace, some the mysticism of love and so on, and there is perfect understanding between the mystics belonging to the different religions.

Due to these outer differences the followers of every religion think that there is truth in their religion only; and some of these followers, quite in good faith and in order to spread the truth in that religion for the benefit of others, begin to impose their own ideas and ideals on them. Thus has arisen the missionary spirit quite in conformity with the human psychological laws which, with added dogmatism and oppression, has given rise to what we may call aggressive sectarianism. It is this aggressive sectarianism that is harmful and is the cause of religious antagonism. The qualities emphasized, for example, duty, purity, beauty, righteousness, love, sacrifice and so on, are certainly not antagonistic but positively complementary. They must all be developed fully for the final spiritual elevation of a person. The religion that will be most helpful for a particular nation or a particular individual is what is required for that individual or nation to take the next

step in the course of spiritual elevation. Universal religion is, therefore, an impossibility.

After studying the existing religions and also by comparing them with the tenets of old ones as obtained from manuscripts discovered in Egypt, India and America, students of comparative mythology have observed a similarity in the essentials of all different religions, but due to their bias they ascribed this similarity to all religions being born out of the ignorance of men. This view is not supported by students of comparative religion and is evidently untenable, for only results derived by knowledge will agree with one another and not those obtained from ignorance. Thus has been shown not only the essential unity of the religions but, if I may say so, their common origin which is the hierarchy of adepts or just men made perfect. Theosophy embodies all these essential fundamentals of all religions and is therefore Religion, but not a religion.

Mankind throughout all these ages has sought to understand itself and to understand Nature and by its attempt, developed science, philosophy and religion for realizing the Truth. Science starts with its observation of phenomena by the senses and wants to find the causes of these phenomena, then the second set of causes of which the first set are effects, then to a smaller number of causes and so on. The aim is to get at the ultimate cause, the cause of all causes or the causeless cause. Philosophy in a similar way, by correlating the results of different sciences, wants to arrive at the understanding by which the apparent diversity of phenomena can be explained from a central unity. The mystic on the other hand raises his consciousness by a special discipline step by step, he directly experiences the Reality by temperamentally reacting to it. These different branches of knowledge pursued by different sets of people developed more or less independently, and in their exclusiveness each ignored the possibility of attaining truth by other ways. But science could catch the popular imagination by the glamour of its great achievements and predominated over others in popular mind, and scientific materialism was affecting the thought of the West as well as of the East. This influence was at its highest point during the latter part of the nineteenth century,

when Theosophy was re-proclaimed synthesizing science, philosophy and religion, showing their relative positions and functions and the inter-relation between them. It shows that science must explain phenomena with reference to consciousness and life, just as the religious and philosophical teachings must have their support in scientific corroborations. Theosophy is not only a synthesis of all religions, but a synthesis of science, philosophy and religion.

Thus Theosophy comes as a peacemaker between different religions as also between religion, philosophy and science. It emphasizes the fact that Religion is the everlasting search of the human spirit for the Divine and the religions are the different methods adopted for that search. The essential fundamentals of religions that constitute Theosophy may be summarized as follows:

- (1) There is One Eternal, Absolute, Infinite Existence—
One that is incognizable.
- (2) From that One existence proceeds the God, the Creator of a Universe, manifesting Himself as Trinity.
- (3) The whole universe is in God.
- (4) Man is eternal and is a fragment of the Divine, a spark from the divine flame.
- (5) Man evolves gradually developing the powers latent in him. This evolution is controlled by the laws of *karma* (law of cause and effect) and re-incarnation.

From (2) and (3) follows the Principle of Immanence of God. Verily all this is Brahman. This is not Pantheism, for Brahman is not simply all this. He is all this and much more. Having permeated the Universe with a fragment of Himself He remains as is stated in the *Gītā*. God is both Immanent and Transcendent. From (4) we find that man is unborn and eternal. He is not destroyed when the body dies.

Linked with the above principles is that of the solidarity of all living beings. There is only one life and one consciousness and that is the Life and Consciousness of the Brahman or God. All living beings are rooted in that one life. This is the basis of the principle of Universal Brotherhood from which is derived the first

object of the Theosophical Society. Just as the Immanence of God is the basis of all religions, so the solidarity of man is that of morality.

Theosophy as an outcome of the study of the evolution of forms or bodies and of life and consciousness working in and through these vehicles, offers a consistent system of philosophy of life. In so doing, it has utilized the results so far obtained by different sciences and those of new psychology as well as of occult investigation by great *Yogins*. It explains the formation of the seven planes of nature or *Prakṛiti*—Physical, Astral, Mental, *Buddhic*, *Ātmic*, *Anupādaka* and *Ādi*. Man is a fragment of the Divine with all divine powers latent in him and is sown into the field of Nature in order that by evolution he may develop those powers. The spirit comes down from plane to plane involving into grosser and grosser matter till it reaches the mineral kingdom. Here is the turning point, and it then rises higher and higher through the vegetable and animal kingdoms into the human stage. While entering into the human stage he receives a fresh outpour of divine influence. Here, therefore, is a discontinuity. The human brain and soul are not developed as a result of evolution from the ape brain and soul. This has been supported by many biologists. Prof. Mac Bride in his *Evolution* says that there is probably a fresh outburst of divine creative power in creating man. Hence man, not other animals, is made in the image of God. Man thus possesses two souls—one animal soul (*bhūtātman*) and the other the human soul (*jīvātman*). At first man, following the "outgoing" path, grows by grasping and absorbing. He will then follow the path of renunciation and evolve by love and sacrifice. The Divine in man will overpower the brute in him, and expressing his latent powers he will rise to the level of God. Theosophy shows the past, the present and the destiny of man, and that every man is a god in the becoming. It shows that there is a plan of God working itself out through the mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms, and that this plan is evolution. Finally as a result of long evolution man will ultimately attain God by himself becoming God. It is also definitely indicated that by following the disciplines given in the esoteric parts of different religions, man

can attain the goal in a much shorter time. Theosophy thus offers us a definite hope.

The Theosophical Society was formed in November 1875 in the City of New York by Madame H. P. Blavatsky, a Russian lady of aristocratic family and Col. Henry Steel Olcott, an American lawyer and army man. Its original object was to study the Eastern Yoga system and other systems of philosophy. After about two years it changed its Headquarters to India and it is now located at Adyar, Madras. Its objects are:—

- (1) To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour
- (2) To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.
- (3) To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

It is now a world-wide international organization with branches in forty-eight countries of the world. It is fundamentally a Brotherhood movement. The Society has not made the acceptance of Theosophy a condition of its membership. There is no definite set of tenets or dogmas to be accepted by its members. Persons belonging to all faiths or to none, included in its membership, retain their own religions and are free to express their special views from the Theosophical platform, but only in such a way as not to wound the religious feelings of others. They enjoy perfect freedom of thought and are expected to allow the same freedom to others. A Hindu remaining a Hindu in outer garb and inner belief can join the Society. The only restriction put on him is that he is not to call the followers of other faiths in or outside the Society *mlechhas*. A Muslim member retaining his own individuality will say his own prayer in the Theosophical Hall, but he is not to think the followers of other faiths *kafirs*. Similarly a Christian member will be expected only to be tolerant to other faiths and not to call the followers of other faiths pagans or heathens. Members of the Theosophical Society are not bound to subscribe to the views of any person, however exalted his position in the Society may be: members belonging to different sects,

when entering the Society, do not leave any portion of their positive faith or any of their peculiarities, but they are to leave out all aggressive sectarianism, and they may remain attached to any teacher or school of thought they choose either inside or outside the Society. The common element in them is the truth-seeking spirit. They are all truth-seekers and are pilgrims travelling towards the same goal, although differently. The motto of the Society is—"There is no religion higher than truth." If any person following any particular creed maintains in word and deed a friendly and brotherly attitude to the followers of other creeds, he is a Theosophist whether his name appears in the register of the Society or not. There are other brotherhood organizations in the world, but I know of none in which no personality is held up to be accepted as a teacher or no change is to be made in inner principles and outer garb.

The one article of belief that is to be compulsorily accepted by every member of this Society is the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood. This has been taught by all prophets and is behind all religions, but this principle, although the most vital for the spiritual elevation, is observed more by its breach. By coming into the Society and practising this principle, a Hindu will be a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim, and a Christian a truer Christian. The Theosophical Society stands for co-operation, fellow-feeling and amity between man and man and nation and nation and it stands for the fraternity of faiths. This certainly is a true spiritual outlook, for spirit is one while matter is diverse.

I now conclude by reciting the universal prayer of the Theosophists:—

"O Hidden Life vibrant in every atom,
O Hidden Light shining in every creature,
O Hidden Love embracing all in oneness,
May each who feels himself as one with Thee
Know he is therefore one with every other."

Peace! Peace!! Peace!!!

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST

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I shall speak on "The Spirit of Christ," dwelling on the phases thereof which relate to the transformation of man's moral condition from sin to righteousness. It is important that man should get Christ's spirit in order to get eternal peace and joy with God or salvation or eternal life. Christ says: "It is *the spirit* that giveth life, the flesh profiteth nothing" (*John*, vi. 63). He also said: "The hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers" (*John*, iv. 23). Outward religious forms and ceremonies have no value unless the spirit inside is transformed to be in tune with the divine spirit. Forms are temporary and will disappear, but the spirit will remain forever. Therefore, it is important that we should know what spirit we should have in our relation with our fellowmen and with God. Christ's spirit is the perfect ideal. So I shall speak on this with regard only to the following six points:—

The Spirit of Christ is—

- (1) The Spirit of Truth,
- (2) The Spirit of Righteousness,
- (3) The Spirit of Purity and Holiness,
- (4) The Spirit of Justice,
- (5) The Spirit of perfect Divine Love, and
- (6) The Omnipresent Spirit, pervading everywhere.

Now I come to the first point—

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

In this connection I shall speak on (i) his claim that he is The Truth, and (ii) his teaching about speaking the truth.

(i) *Christ says "I am the Truth."*

Christ said about himself, "I am the Truth, The Way and The Life" (*John*, xiv. 6). In him all moral truths are

personified. Men are, today, looking for Truth. Many have declared that they want the truth and nothing but the truth. What, then, is *truth*? This is a great question and is answered in various ways, by different thinkers. The materialistic,—the idealistic, and the rational philosophers have their own answers to this question.

A materialist, who says that thoughts are the processes of matter, may define truth as "expressive of the properties and relations of material things and human beings." Such a definition of truth has nothing to do with the moral sense in man. Such a knowledge does not benefit him morally. Though he may have a knowledge of things outside himself and of a lower order than himself, yet there is a feeling of want in him for knowledge of what is higher than himself.

An idealist denies the existence of matter apart from ideas or mental ideas. He may say that all that we see and know about matter is illusion. These different philosophers may define truth in their own way.

A rational thinker takes the facts as they are. He cannot deny the existence of matter, neither can he deny the existence of a spiritual something inside him that does the thinking. He realizes that there is an *Ego*, a spiritual reality that is quite different from the material body which is called a "Spiritual man," "Soul", or "Spirit." Hence the rational thinker recognizes the different truths in different spheres of life. There is a truth in regard to the material things outside himself in their relations to man and God. There is also a truth that concerns man's spiritual side, and his relation to his fellowmen and to God, the Creator and Judge of the whole universe.

To turn to the moral sphere, truth may be defined as expressive of the moral virtues—love, gentleness, goodness, kindness, justice, etc.,—in relation to related moral beings or our fellowmen and to God. But these moral virtues are abstract virtues without value unless they are personified in a living moral being. We are unable to conceive of love without thinking of it in a person who manifests it in action. The human mind cannot conceive of any of the moral virtues without a being in whom these qualities

are personified. As we cannot imagine of flowers without a flower plant, and of fruits without a fruit-tree, so also the human mind cannot conceive of these moral abstract virtues apart from a being in whom they are perfectly personified. There must, therefore, be a person somewhere in this world to whom humanity can look as the perfect ideal, the complete and perfect personification of all the moral qualities or in whom all truth can be found.

Christ claims to be *the Truth*. When we look to him for perfection in any of the moral virtues that are held in esteem by all moral beings, we are not disappointed. In him we see *perfect love*; in him we see perfect *holiness*, purity, goodness, kindness, mercy, gentleness and justice—all these blended together in perfection. In him we find the *Truth*—about our duties towards our fellowmen and towards God, the Father and Creator of all. He is the embodiment of all that is best, sublimest and most beautiful—the most perfect type and ideal of humanity. There is no fragment of truth regarding God and righteousness that is found in the teachings of any great teacher of religion and sages of old, that is not found in the teachings of Christ. Dr. Well says: "Some truths, no doubt, are common to Christ and the sages; but with Christ these truths have their rightful place in a complete, consistent, spiritual unity, while with the sages they form a broken piece-work. Natural morality, as far as it goes, is not at strife with Christian ethics. Our faith in the greater does not require us to disown the less." Christ came, not to destroy, but to fulfil all the fragments of truth found in all religious systems. In the words of Justin Martyr, "Whatever things were rightly said among all men are the property of ~~us~~ Christians Christ appropriates and amplifies all the loftiest teachings of nature and reason."

It is argued by some that the very existence of some of the truths taught by our Lord Jesus Christ, in the teachings of the sages, proves that he did not bring anything new to this world. But the argument of a Christian is that, as God is the God of all nations, he tried to shed forth some light, or some fragments of truth to the world at different ages, as far as the human mind could then receive, but these fragments of truth found in the teachings of the various sages are only the means in the divine

plan to prepare humanity everywhere to receive the final, most complete and purest revelation of divine truth, most fully and perfectly personified in Christ, who said: "I am the Truth." I will close this part of my speech with Whittier's beautiful words:—

"Nor doth it lessen what he taught
Or make the gospel Jesus brought
Less precious, that his lips retold
Some portion of the truth of old;
Denying not the proven seers,
The tested wisdom of the years;
Confirming with his own impress
The common law of righteousness.
We search the world for truth; we cull
The good, the pure, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll
From all old flower-fields of the soul;
And weary seekers of the best,
We come back laden from our quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the Book our mothers read
And all the treasures of our thought
In His harmonious fulness wrought."

In the Spirit of Christ we find all truth in regard to God and man embodied and personified. He himself is the embodiment of all his teachings, which flow from his very life and nature. Christ was the only philosopher, prophet, teacher, reformer and priest, who always practised what he taught, or rather from whose life all his perfect and moral teachings flow. Hence he justly and rightly claims "I am the Truth."

(ii) *Christ's teaching about speaking the truth.*

I will now speak of his Spirit which was manifested by Christ's teaching: "Let your speech be yea, yea and nay, nay, and whatsoever is more than this cometh of the evil one" (Matt. v. 3). One of his disciples, namely, Peter said, "No guile was found in his mouth." In him there was "truth in

the inward parts." There was no hypocrisy or any deception in his inward thoughts. This is the most important part in one's life. Without this spirit in man's inward part, his life becomes vitiated.

When we look around, in almost every department of life we meet with deception and hypocritical dealings with one another. A person says "yes" when he does not mean "yes" and says "no" when he does not mean it. I believe the Spirit of truth is divine, and he who deceives and is hypocritical cannot be of God. Any system of philosophy or form of worship that will countenance hypocrisy in any shape or form, is vain and deceptive. Sincerity is required of all men in order to enable them to get along with one another and with God.

There is a class of people who think that in business and politics they may practise deception and hypocrisy, which they call "diplomacy." The Spirit of truth condemns such an attitude in any man. I believe there will be a time when the judgment of God will fall upon such persons. There is, in every human breast, a latent knowledge that lies or deceptions of any sort are to be despised and condemned. No nation can thrive when its politicians practise hypocrisy and deception. No country can be free from God's condemnation when its rulers are deceptive. Whatever is not of truth must, some day, fall and perish.

In speaking the truth, Christ risked his own life. So also, every truthful man must be willing to incur any risk for the sake of truth. He must speak the truth under all circumstances. That is the only spirit that will actually be respected and honoured by all moral beings. When we read of men, who have told the truth in spite of the risk they have had to take, our hearts are touched. Martyrs told the truth and were always ready to give their lives for it. Therefore their lives and moral courage inspire moral courage and life in us.

What a wonderful place this world would be if we could all depend on each other's words! Good men are often deceived by selfish schemers for their own personal gain and fame; but though good men may lose material things, they store up for

themselves a peaceful and good conscience and eternal fame and happiness. Religion aims at making people honest and truthful. The Spirit of Christ is the spirit of Truth. Whosoever has got his Spirit is always truthful and honest in every sphere of life.

2. THE SPIRIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Christ's Spirit is the spirit of righteousness. He is called "The Sun of righteousness" (*O. Test.—Mal.*, iv. 2). There must be a being on earth who should be the Ideal of *Righteousness*. In Christ's Spirit we find that ideal. What is righteousness? Righteousness is man's just dealings with his fellowmen. Christ's dealings with his fellowmen were all righteous. He went about doing good. His teachings, which were the manifestations of his spirit, were very clear on this point. He did not approve of man's devotion only to God without doing his duty to his fellowmen. He said:—"If thou art offering thy gift at the altar and there rememberest that thy brother has aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (*Matt.* v. 23). By these words he shows that he wants reconciliation or righteous dealings with one's fellowmen, and this must go side by side with divine worship and offering. Religion without righteousness cannot be accepted by God.

When he went to visit a certain person, named, Zacchaeus, an honourable tax collector, he taught him about righteousness. Zacchaeus stood before him a convicted sinner with a great godly sorrow for his sins and said to the Lord Jesus Christ, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor and if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold" (*Luke*, xix. 8).

Wherever Christ's Spirit has entered there will be conviction of unrighteousness, and a person, who is thus convicted, will not be able to keep sin and deception in his heart. He will confess them to his fellowmen and seek reconciliation with them. I have, in my 33 years' experience in missionary work, seen thousands of persons who have been thus convicted of their unrighteous dealings with their fellowmen and who have made reconciliation and restitution. I am not the only Christian preacher, who has

seen such transformation of men's lives. Thousands of others have seen the same thing, and that throughout the ages.

I know of a man who had wrongfully taken several thousands of rupees in his business with one of his own relatives. He came to one of my meetings and felt the Spirit of Christ working in him. He was greatly convicted and went away from the meeting with a heavy heart. One evening before the meeting began, he came to me and said that he could not bear it any longer. He wanted to give his heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. I asked him to pray and confess his sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He prayed very earnestly and while praying, his body shook and perspired. Then he confessed his sins to God and promised him that he would restore what he had wrongfully taken. He accepted Christ as his Saviour and felt a wonderful peace in his soul. He rose up with a light and happy heart, praising God. Afterwards he gave back the money he had wrongfully taken. That is the spirit of righteousness working in the heart of a sinner.

I have seen men who were enemies and working to ruin each other, but when they felt the spirit of righteousness working in them they wept and cried and kissed each other. Two men were carrying pistols with them, each with the intention of killing the other. One passed by a meeting house and seeing a sign inviting all to enter, he went in. After a while his enemy, who was pursuing him, also passed that way, and stopping to listen at the front of the meeting house, he was invited in. He did not know that his enemy was there, and while they were in that meeting, both were convicted of their sins. The words which the preacher preached, of sin, righteousness and judgment went to their very hearts. At the close of the sermon the preacher invited sinners to come forward to give their hearts to God. One after another came forward in front of the pulpit and knelt at the benches. Both of these men came also, but they did not see each other. The preacher prayed with one and asked him to confess his sins to God. The Spirit of Christ was present there and the man could not hide his sins. He confessed that he had a murderous spirit and had started from home with the

determination to kill his enemy, but that God had convicted him of his sins and he was seized with great fear and trembling for he felt he would stand a condemned sinner before God. So he was now ready to ask forgiveness from his enemy and also to forgive him from the bottom of his heart. He prayed earnestly and by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, there came upon his soul, the peace of God, which he never felt before in his life. The other enemy also did the same and found peace and joy in believing in Christ, whose Spirit of righteousness drove away gloom, distress, enmity, and hatred from his heart. They both felt that they had not done right to each other. When they rose from their knees, to their great surprise, they saw each other, and with happy faces they embraced and asked each other's forgiveness. What a joy! What a heavenly experience on earth! That is the working of Christ's Spirit of righteousness. Any form of worship that lacks that revivifying and sanctifying power, lacks the most important part in religion and such worship becomes formal and practically useless for the transformation of man's moral life. Religion, and in fact, everything else in life, is vain and useless without righteousness. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (*O. Test.—Prov.*, xiv. 34).

This Spirit of righteousness requires a person, who has taken anything wrongfully from any man, to give it back to him. It requires a person, who cherishes any hatred or enmity against any one to forgive him from his heart and not to hate him any more. It requires a person to confess any lies told against his fellowmen and to make peace with him.

Any system of religion, that does not have power to produce in a sinner's heart this moral transformation which causes him to do right to his fellowmen, must be lacking in vitality and power. Therefore such a system cannot bring salvation to a sinner. In Christ I have found that wonderful transformation and power that enables one to make his wrongs right with his fellowmen and to deal rightly with him and to love God with one's whole heart.

3. THE SPIRIT OF PURITY AND HOLINESS

Christ's Spirit is the spirit of purity and holiness. He taught:—"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Without purity of heart no one can see God. Holiness in God is that quality or attribute in him which makes him drive away from him anything which is not according to his own nature and will. Holiness or purity in man is that attitude in a man's spirit manifested in his thoughts, desires and actions which makes him do only such things which he knows and believes to be God's will for him to do.

St. Paul, the renowned apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, said: "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." All things which are sinful must be out of a man's heart. Christ said:—

"For from within, out of the heart of men, evil, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness: all these evil things proceed from within and defile the man" (*Mark*, vii. 21-22). Again, "Everyone that commiteth sin is the bond servant of sin. . . . If the Son (Christ) shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (*John*. viii. 34-36).

To be pure, a man's heart must be purified of all sins and all sinful inclinations. With such a sinful condition in the heart, God's will cannot be done, man becomes blind spiritually and does not see God and therefore he persists in his evil intentions. When a person comes in contact with Christ's Spirit of holiness, he sees his sinful condition and cries unto God for mercy and gets a new spirit from him.

A drunkard, once came to one of my meetings. He had lived a hopeless life and did not want, previous to this, to see his friends; he wanted to avoid them, but somehow or other he happened to be led in a providential manner, to the place where I was holding evangelistic meetings. While I was preaching I saw him weeping and covering his face. I thought he would decide to repent and give his heart to God, but he did not. He went away and came to another service. Again his heart was deeply touched and he wept. He felt Christ calling him to put

away sin and to give his whole heart to God. He rose from his seat and came to one of the front benches in the church. Some of the preachers prayed together with him and pointed him to the Lord Jesus Christ. After that he felt that he was a new creature and he was transformed, and up to this day he has been thoroughly saved from all his evil and sinful habits. I can tell you many life stories of wonderful transformations from sin to holiness—men whose lives have been completely changed and made holy by the operation of Christ's Spirit of holiness. Who can stand before him and not see his Holy Spirit, which pierces a man's heart and penetrates into his soul and makes him realize anything that may be impure therein?

4. THE SPIRIT OF JUSTICE

Christ's Spirit of justice made him declare plain truths to people about God's divine justice and judgment upon sinners after this life on earth. He spoke of the judgment of hell and asked the hypocritically religious Jews of his time, "How can ye escape the damnation of hell" (*Matt. xxiii. 33*)? He condemned the lip and formal religious worship of his day and told the Jews that after this life on earth, there is hell for sinners. This spirit of justice cannot bear with hypocrisy also in the worship of God. Lip-worship is not sufficient. The whole heart must go to God. He who worships God must worship him in spirit and in truth. Christ's just Spirit condemns those who are hypocritical in their worship. He said at one time to the professed religious people of his day:—

"Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy and faith. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, clean first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside thereof may be clean also. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres which

outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly, ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity " (*Matt.*, xxiii. 23, 25-28).

Christ said that there should be nothing that ought to stand between a person and God; nothing should cause him to stumble, to enter into God's spiritual Kingdom.

" If thine eye cause thee to stumble, cast it out. It is better for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God with one eye rather than having two eyes to be cast into Hell, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched " (*Mark*, ix. 47-48).

Some people do not believe that there is punishment after this life, in hell; but I have every reason to believe the words of the Lord Jesus Christ who spoke what he knew, for he said he came from heaven to seek and to save the lost. He came to declare what he knew. Men's theories and imaginations regarding the future cannot be known by man's own inference, but it can be known only by revelation. He came to reveal to this world the final doom and destiny of Man. His life and words convince us that he knew what he was talking about. He declared this truth with a pathetic and sad feeling. He warned the people of the impending calamity and torment in hell. He sealed his declaration by his own blood as he was ready to die and did die for the world in order to save it from this terrible doom in hell.

Once I believe in the divine revelation I am driven to Christ and him alone and I am committed, by all reasons to place implicit faith in his declaration. There are, besides, reasons strong enough of the punishment after this life and Christ's declaration is that this punishment is eternal. He said :— " These (unrighteous) shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into everlasting life " (*Matt.*, xxv. 46). He declared that there is hell prepared for the devil and his angels (*Matt.*, xxv. 41) and that hell is the place into which the unrighteous shall go and there suffer everlasting punishment.

If there is a necessity of penitentiaries in which some criminals

on earth, serve their life sentence in order to uphold the justice of the law in the governments in this world, I see no reason why there should not be an eternal penitentiary, wherein all the fighters against God and His eternal divine laws, which are the outcome of his holy nature, will suffer their eternal punishment.

I am aware of ideas against such a belief, but where is the man whose arguments may be considered perfect and on whom we can put our trust for our final destiny? All reasons are of the same standard, and are defective, limited in knowledge and only theorists at their best. But here Christ stands the most holy, the most loving, the most gentle and kind, and yet the most just. He is the one who declares the existence of hell, for he came purposely to save men. Is there any reason to disbelieve him? I say no. Supposing he is what he claims himself to be, what will happen to you, oh poor sinner?

5. THE SPIRIT OF PERFECT DIVINE LOVE

As St. Paul said I see "in Him dwelleth the fulness of the God-head bodily." I am unable, by any stretch of imagination, to conceive of any revelation of perfect divine love that may in any way be greater than that personified in the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ in Gethsemane and on the cross of Calvary.

Dear friends, I must invite your attention a little to this most important part in Christ's life. His spirit of divine love manifested on earth is known to every reader of the New Testament, but perhaps the deep moral philosophy involved therein is not rightly apprehended by many.

It is true that the highest manifestation of a man's love for another is by suffering for him. In Christian theology the cross has a wonderful halo; but that cross is not a common cross of wood. When we speak of the cross we mean the One, that Righteous and Holy One, who was crucified thereon, with the manifestation of the spiritual agony while in that state of crucifixion. It is the Spirit of Christ manifested thereon that shows such perfect divine love as the human mind can ever imagine.

Christ connected his sufferings and death with the sins of humanity. Christians have, throughout the centuries, believed that he died because he suffered for our sins, that he bore our sins, and that by taking our sins upon himself we are made free from the punishment of God which would have fallen upon us if he had not taken our place. This belief has been expressed in various ways by different theories of the Atonement of Christ. I am not entering into the discussion of these different theories. Time and place do not allow me to do so; but I want to express as clearly as possible the moral philosophy involved in these sufferings of Christ for the sin of man which shows the perfect love of God for man.

We all realize that there is punishment attached to sin or moral transgression. We feel it deeply in our moral nature. There is an inner voice in every human breast that feels that there is punishment attached to any moral transgression. Whether that punishment is temporary or eternal, here on earth, or after death in the next world, I am not entering into that question. The orthodox Christian theology, however, believes that there is eternal punishment for the wicked, and eternal life or happiness for the righteous. They base their belief in Christ's own words—"These (the unrighteous) shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (*Matt.*, xxv. 46).

The sufferings of Christ must, therefore, be related to the sins of men which will bring upon them eternal punishment.

Description of the Suffering

In the garden of Gethsemane, while praying in the cool of the evening, Jesus was in great agony. It is written thus:—"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground" (*Luke*, xxii. 44). There must have been an untold agony that seized his soul at the time of prayer that made him sweat, and that sweat became as it were great drops of blood. This agony can be understood from his own words to his disciples, when he said to them:—"My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (*Matt.* xxvi. 38). What could have been the cause

of this agony? There could have been no outward material cause which could have brought such an agony to his soul. This suffering could not have been caused by the thought of his own impending death or separation from his disciples for even martyrs rejoiced when death faced them. This was, no doubt, the suffering in the realm of the spirit, owing to his relation to the sins of men. A few hours before this incident he told his disciples that his blood would be poured out for the remission of sins, thus connecting his sufferings with the sins of man.

On the cross again, we find him crucified between two robbers. There he cried aloud as no good and righteous man would be expected to cry at such a time. He said: "Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani! that is, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" (*Matt.*, xxvii. 45)? This feeling of being forsaken was real to his spirit, and nothing could have brought greater agony to his spirit than this feeling. The *loud* cry surely is the manifestation of that terrible agony in the realm of the spirit. It could not have been caused by the pain of the nails in his hands and feet. The robbers even did not cry loudly as he did, nor could such an agony on the cross have been caused by any other material cause. We cannot imagine any such cause. The intense suffering of his soul can to a certain extent be comprehended from the fact that he cried again with a loud voice and expired. It is written that he cried, "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit; and having said this he gave up the ghost" (*Luke*, xxiii. 46).

Towards evening they found that he had expired, while the two robbers were still living. The soldiers thrust a spear into his side and blood and water came out. This, according to medical authorities, is a sign that his heart was ruptured. This must have been due to the excessive untold agony which he experienced, manifested by his cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me."

The question is, "What is the cause of this untold agony in his soul?"

Suffering on account of man's sins

The reply was given by the prophet, Isaiah, who prophesied,

about 700 years before Christ was born in the flesh into this world, saying:—

“ He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him ; and with his stripes we are healed. All, we like sheep, have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way, and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth ; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away ; and for his generation, who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due.

He poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.”

(*Isaiah*, liii. 5-8, 12)

The Philosophy of this Agony due to the Bearing of sin

Love automatically draws upon the possessor thereof the trouble and distress, the pain and anguish of those whom he loves. The greater that love is, the greater is that distress or anguish. This is the working of the moral law in the realm of the spirit among related moral beings. It is not anything that is forced by anyone from outside, it is an automatic natural sequence of the very fact of the existence of divine love in one's heart. A mother is not forced or bound by any material outward cause to love her own child and suffer for it. She feels that the pains and sufferings of her child are her pains and sufferings. She forgets herself in the sufferings of her loved one, she is merged automatically into those sufferings. The shame and disgrace, the glory and joy of her child are hers. She feels that she lives in her child. These are facts in the moral sphere.

Even without rising to a very high degree of love we find

that even goodness or virtue draws upon the possessor thereof, the troubles and burdens of others. This is a fact in the moral world, and it is due to *this truth* in the moral sphere that there arise reformers and self-sacrificing men who go about to do good to others, to ameliorate the pains and distress of others.

In the moral experiences of related beings the bearing of others' burdens is an incumbent moral law, which works automatically and which brings condemnation to the heart of a good, virtuous and loving person, if he attempts to throw off the burdens of others which come automatically upon him.

If this is an undeniable truth in the realm of the spirit among related moral beings, we would expect that God, who loves us, will automatically bear our burdens and carry our sins upon himself. If Christ is what he has claimed himself to be—the manifestation of the Father on earth, or the *Immanuel*, i.e. God with us in the flesh, then we would expect him to bear the burdens of our moral nature.

The law of love, which governs the moral nature of related moral beings, may be called the law of moral identification by whose operation one who is in possession of divine love automatically feels that the pangs and woes, distress and anguish, joy and sorrow, shame, disgrace or glory, sin or righteousness, of those whom he loves are his own.

Christ's Spirit of love, therefore, which was the Spirit of the Father manifested in the flesh, could not but draw automatically the troubles, and sins of the world upon his own spirit. He said: "He who has seen me has seen the Father." He was the perfect revelation of the Father's heart suffering for the sins of man. He was, therefore, designated by the inspired prophet, Isaiah, who spoke about 700 years before he came to this earth, as a "Man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs; and as one from whom men hide their face, he was despised; and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities" (*Isa. liii. 3-5*).

Christ's agony on the cross was the agony in the spirit, brought upon himself by the very fact that he was divine love, drawing upon himself the sufferings of the punishment due to sin which the people have to suffer. It was on the cross of Calvary that he felt the pangs of the punishment which men would suffer in hell for their sins.

The cross was the place and the right time in which that suffering could be well felt and manifested. There he was crucified, though no spot of sin nor crime was found in him, though righteous and holy, kind and loving he was. No one could find any moral flaw in him save that he broke away from the traditions of the elders among the Jews. Sin with all its blinding qualities, envy, jealousy, covetousness, selfishness, worked in the heart of those Jews of his time—of the priests, Scribes and Pharisees and of the elders of the Jewish nation, and it worked also in the heart of Pilate, the governor of Judea, who was thinking more of his own fame and popularity among the Jews than of doing justice as a governor should do. All these men who were connected with the events that led to the crucifixion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, were actuated by their own selfish interests. Sin reached its highest pinnacle and made spiritual and temporal rulers of the day blind to the real Light of the world. They could not behold the Sun of righteousness, the light of the world, the very image of God, the picture of the fulness of divine love; and the hearts of these men, darkened by selfish passions, caused the King of Glory to go to the cross for crucifixion—the punishment which used to be meted out to the worst criminals of the day. That was the only right and fit time for the manifestation of that moral glory of divine love which bears the sins of those who were God's own creatures, who were made in his image. What did Christ's spirit manifest at that time? He prayed for them and said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (*Luke*, xxiii. 34).

But turn to the other side of the picture. Could such sins go unpunished? Could such violation of justice and righteousness go unpunished? Could such hearts, possessed with such evil passions, be united with God? Our whole moral nature revolts

to think that there could be no separation between the spirit of the holy and righteous God and the spirit of those men who were thus possessed with such sins. There ought to be and there would be separation of wicked persons and hypocrites from the holy God. Christ declared this fact. He therefore, being divine love, could not but feel the anguish and agony of those men, who were the religious leaders of the day and who were supposed to be God's special favourites. These were the very men, who thought they were God's people, who, on account of their sinful and selfish hearts, would be separated from God; and who would, therefore, each one, cry in agony, saying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The panoramic view of their suffering was before Christ while he was on the cross. He forgot himself, being divine, and lost himself in the pang and anguish of those men; he felt their pangs and anguish and therefore could not but feel their feeling of being forsaken. Therefore he cried, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" He experienced such a forsaken feeling as was theirs. Their forsaken feeling and their anguish were drawn, automatically, by his spirit. Such must be the automatic drawing of divine love of the sufferings of sinners. It is stated that Christ poured out his *soul* unto death for the sins of man—Yes he automatically poured out his *soul*, his spirit, into the feelings of anguish and woes of these transgressors. How could he avoid it? How could he feel otherwise if he was the heart of the Father manifested on earth? He said: "He who hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Christ's spirit of suffering is, therefore, the spirit that reveals the agonizing heart of the Father in heaven for the sins of man which brings distress and suffering to his heart. Nowhere else do we find the manifestation of the suffering of the divine heart for the sins of man than in Christ.

This divine love manifested in suffering, that is of the worst possible type, is also the love that is always ready to serve others. The possessors thereof are ready to pray for those who persecute them, to love those who hate them and to spend their life for the good of others, and for helping them to come in contact with the spirit of God.

The cross of Christ is the meeting place between sinful man and the suffering heart of God for man's sake. It is the only place in human history where sin, such as envy, jealousy, covetousness, love of one's own fame, is manifested in its greatest heinousness, when the hearts of those persecutors were so blinded as not to recognize the Sun of righteousness, the Light of the world, the King of Glory, the incarnated God himself and as to cause them to do all that they could, to put an end to his life. This shows what sin is. It is the same in the human heart whether it operated in those people at Christ's time, or in the hearts of the people of the present day.

The cross of Christ is therefore the place where sin can be put away and everlasting righteousness be brought into the heart. Daniel, the prophet, prophesied 600 years before Christ that this would be the time "To finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness" (*Dan.*, ix. 24).

Before I proceed to another part of my subject, I must say that he who has received the Spirit of Christ has received the spirit of divine love that makes him bear other peoples' burdens and makes him love his enemies, pray for them that persecute him and bless those that despitefully use him. This is the history of Christian missions which have no other motive than to impart the Spirit of Christ to their fellowmen. The Christian missions feel that it is their duty to save their fellowmen and to serve them. It is their God-given duty constrained by the love of God in Christ that makes them spend their money, talent and time to give to others what God has given to them. They want no reward from any one. The only reward is to see their fellowmen get joy and happiness in getting the salvation offered by the Lord Jesus Christ to them.

6. THE OMNIPRESENT SPIRIT PERVADING EVERYWHERE

Now I come to the last part of my speech, namely, The Spirit of Christ is the Omnipresent Spirit pervading everywhere.

We are not speaking only of the historical Christ. The

record says, "He died and rose again and is alive forever more." After he had risen from the grave he appeared to his dejected disciples and showed himself alive for the space of forty days, before he ascended on high. Before his ascension to heaven he said to his disciples:—"All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: *and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world*" (*Matt.* xxviii. 18-20). Christ is alive. His Spirit is pervading everywhere. He has been with his disciples who followed him, throughout the ages, and that is the reason why the Christians can suffer martyrdom. His Spirit is pervading and is present here to-day, calling India and all the nations of the Earth:—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest in your souls" (*Matt.*, xi. 28, 29). His Spirit is standing here and he says: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink" (*John*, vii. 37).

The call of his Spirit is heard today, by hundreds and thousands who have found peace and rest in their souls and have quenched their thirsty souls by drinking in the waters of life.

He is always with his disciples, who follow him and do his will implicitly. He does not leave them. He gives them eternal peace and joy and satisfies completely their hungry souls for he is the "Bread of life." With open arms he calls all—the high and the low, the poor and the rich, the white and the black, the brown and the yellow—no difference is made with him. He is the One who can give real peace in the heart for he is the Prince of Peace and the King of Righteousness. His Spirit is the only one that can give real peace to the hearts of men, and to the nations of this world. Those nations which have rejected him will weep and cry, but the hearts which have made him their "Life," their "Hope of glory," their "All in all," have found peace and joy and assurance of future happiness in a way they have never experienced before in their lives. I am one of those

who have been so saved and redeemed by the Spirit of Christ and I pray and hope that my countrymen, yea the whole world would come to Christ and find in him the desire of their hearts. I can say with Paul, that we are complete in him (Christ). In Christ I feel in my heart as the old prophet Isaiah said "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God ; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness " (*Isaiah*, lxi. 10).

Christ's Spirit is still calling all to come to him. " And the spirit and the bride (the church) say, come. And he that heareth, let him say, come. And he that is athirst, let him come ; he that will, let him take the water of life freely " (*Rev.*, xxii. 17).

May God bless you all and may Christ's Spirit overcome all— " For if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his " (*Romans*, viii. 9) and where he is he cannot go. He is still stretching forth his arms to embrace all who come to him and he is calling to *all* without any exception. " Come unto me and I will give you rest." Amen.

TEACHINGS OF ISLAM AS A PATH TO GOD

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The human intellect, however keen it may be, cannot probe into the ways of the ever-inscrutable Existence. This is why merciful Allah Himself tells us the way of knowing Him. Human eyes cannot visualise Him; it is Allah Who reveals Himself unto human eyes. The Holy Koran teaches us this prayer at the very beginning: " O Allah, we want to know Thee, we want Thy assistance. Be kind enough to tell us the easiest way of knowing Thee—the way of the blessed who have known Thee."

Islam teaches us to acquire the manifold attributes of Allah. We mention here the four noble attributes of Allah:

Firstly, Allah is the Protector of the Universe. He has created man for the good of the world. Man, too, must dedicate

himself to the welfare of the world. Allah says: "Beggars and the destitute have some claim to your wealth and property. Do good unto your parents, relatives, neighbours, poor orphans, way-farers and all living beings." All are equally entitled to worship the Lord of the Universe. The door of the temple of God must be flung open to all and sundry. So in order to attain Allah all people must congregate and offer their united prayers to Him.

Secondly, Allah is merciful. His mercy knows no distinction, no discrimination and no return. All are equally blessed by His mercy. "There is no god but God. Think of God as you think of your father." As a father does not like that his sons should divide and quarrel among themselves, merciful Allah, too, likewise does not want His children to divide and quarrel. So we must be socially and spiritually united. He alone has attained eternal life, who has dedicated himself to the service of humanity like the sun, the moon and the earth. The religion, which is meant for the whole world but not for any particular nationality, caste or clime, can really help an aspirant to attain God. Islam has acknowledged the essential truths of all the religions of the world; so in universal Islam are incorporated the fundamental truths of all religions. In fact, no one can be a Mussulman and no one can attain Allah without acknowledging the essential truths of all religions.

Thirdly, Allah is Rahim. The word 'Rahim' means one, who shows more compassion and beneficence as a reward or return for good deeds and noble virtues. Those who give wealth for God's sake receive still more from Allah. We, too, should give to the best of our ability more than what the members of our society, our neighbours, our relatives and others are entitled to get. Extend your helping hands to your parents, to the faithful and to the antagonists seeking for peace.

Fourthly, another attribute of Allah is that He is the Supreme Judge, Who dispenses justice according to the merits or demerits of the acts done. Allah is supremely conscious of the real question at issue and does never punish heavily for a trivial act of sin. He does not pay heed to any recommendation. He gives every

man his due. His justice is largely tempered with mercy and sympathy. Every man is also a judge and he must be a true judge like Allah and see that one is not punished for the guilt of another. We are to judge with feelings of love, sympathy and justice. We must see that we are not actuated by any sectarian or communal animosity.

The natural craving of the soul to attain the Eternal makes a man discontent with things unreal. This is why the highest fulfilment of human life lies in the attainment of the Supreme Reality. None can enjoy bliss either in this life or hereafter without God-realization.

Modern people can rally under the banner of Islam, which is able to solve all the momentous problems of the present-day world. In these days of anti-God campaign, when virtue is at stake and untruth reigns supreme, from the hearts of the real seekers after Truth well forth prayers to Allah: "O God, deliver us from evil and illumine our path. In this hour of peril, reveal Thyself unto us, as Thou didst many a time in ages past, and save us from impending ruin." And the Great Allah has listened to their supplications.

A NEW WORLD IMPETUS

F. ROSSETTI

Y. M. C. A., Calcutta

A little over nineteen hundred years ago a wild-looking man appeared on the stage of history, bearded and girded with camel's hair. As he was he lived on locusts and wild honey; he was brave, had a love for the open air and was kindly. He proclaimed a new kind of message. He had strong hands, bloodshed was not in his line nor was hate there. What he proclaimed was the reintegration of personality and expulsion of evil and lust from one's life. Coming of a great universal kingdom called the Kingdom of God, he called the people of the world to confess their sins and to become the children of the Kingdom. Intuitively he

also felt there was someone coming who would preach the same message and he asked his generation to look for this coming. Brave as he was, free as he was, broad as he was, he said: "One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose ; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

Thousands flocked to hear him preach and were baptized and amongst those that came was someone else who was braver still, freer still, broader still and who submitted himself to the rites of baptism in the River Jordan. From that moment we find the Son of God proclaiming His message for the freedom of mankind. Too long, He says, have you all been held under the thralldom of sin and ceremony and false religion and sectarianism. Free yourselves from these things, however valuable they seem to be and understand God. There are many difficult things in the Gospel which are hard to understand and explain but there is a residuum of good things which are as precious jewels which we can claim unreservedly. Every personality on the earth is most sacred. We are of more value than sparrows. What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Even the despised Samaritan is of infinite value in the eyes of the Master. The children we kick and cuff in the streets and in the schools and whom we despise and treat carelessly are of great worth in the eyes of the Maker and are symbolic of the Kingdom of God. The religious man is not one who knows theology or one who can tell how many angels can dance on the finger-nail of a man, but he is truly religious who serves humanity in the power of God and in the service of love. The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister.

The final standard of any judgment will not be dependent upon an accurate theological statement on our part or an avowal of the infallibility of the known tenets of religion but His demand will be—how many cups of cold water have we given to the thirsty ; how often have we visited those in prison and the sick in hospital ; have we given clothing to the unclothed and naked and did we attend to the needs of needy men? He taught that God was not rooted in any one spot but that He is a spirit to be worshipped in spirit and in truth and is a Great Universal Father.

He taught that man's life must be valued by the amount of love he shows—not by hate. By this shall men know that ye are my disciples, that ye love one another. We find here a Master who has no race-hatred, who knows no class-prejudice. He was not one who hated women and called them inferior but one who received all into his friendship, purity and goodwill. He came to cleanse the leper ; heal the sick ; give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, health to the weak ; and he did his utmost to make this world a healthier world, for God is here and He desires ardently to have the world recognize the true fellowship and brotherhood of mankind. How this message has impregnated the lives of men can be illustrated in the life of Sir George Williams, the founder of the Y. M. C. A.

He was being apprenticed to a farmer, but he lost his job because he upset the hay cart ! He then walked to London to look for another job and finally got into a trader's firm. At this draper's establishment he had to "live in," and there a group of several young fellows lived together. Conditions around him were morally filthy and things went on there that made the new-comer squirm. But squirming is not enough. A tucked-up sleeve, a determined attitude, a tightened muscle, courage and prayer are more to the point and soon this stranger got down to work until these moral evils were banished. This was all to the good for Messrs. George Hitchcock & Co., but there were other places in that great city that needed cleaning up too ; so this band of fellows got busy and carried the word along to neighbouring shops, and shortly after, the young manhood of London began to move towards godliness and Christ. This was how the Y. M. C. A. began. Uneducated, young, simple, plain men were touched with the power of an incoming Life, and they went out into a filthy city and did big things. From such a humble origin we now have a movement that is evidenced, as far as my knowledge goes, in every part of the world and which has a great part to play in the coming era.

Who is this weather-beaten-looking fellow by the lakeside—unlettered, hasty-tempered, mentally sluggish and stupid ? No hopes for such a fellow surely ? Well you and I would have

thought so but see! Who is this coming along the shore? He looks alert, he's strong, he has a clear countenance, a penetrating look, kind features characterize Him and what is more He's physically strong. No ascetic this who wants you to fast and look solemn. No kill-joy who puts a wet blanket on everything. Well watch Him. He sees the first man. He admires the muscles on his back, he sees the calf that any international would admire. He sees something behind that face that we wouldn't see. He goes up to the man. "Follow me," he says in tones that brook no refusal and the fisherman drops his net and follows. How slow to teach he was too! How utterly absurd in matters concerning life! But the Master patiently watches and waits. He even went so far as to desert his Master at the crucifixion and he denied him three times but—what's this? This same fellow who a day or two before cringed and caved in before an ordinary servant girl's gibe has now become fired. See his eyes flash. Watch the daring of the man. He faces a howling, angry mob and he speaks boldly. Even the lion turns tail when the crowd is upon him. But this man? He's bolder than a lion. Where did this courage come from? What psychologist will explain? Well, there's only one explanation. This man is filled with the Spirit of Christ, and when Christ reaches a man's heart, nothing will stop him. You may scorn, laugh at, mock, misconstrue, criticize, yes stone and kill, but nothing will stand in his way. The living Christ indwelling in that man's life makes all the difference.

In the same way, if there were time one could show how the Spirit of Christ has animated the lives of scores of others. Time would fail us to speak of Francis of Assisi, Thomas à Kempis, Ignatius of Loyola, Brother Lawrence, Thomas Moore, Hugh Latimer, Ridley, Wickliffe, Wesley, General Booth, Elizabeth Fry, Wilberforce and Clemency Canning, and one could mention many names of the present generation, and finally I do not fail to see that the Spirit of Christ was also working in the hearts of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and his disciple Swami Vivekananda. Wherever there is ugliness, unrighteousness, hate, littleness, there the Spirit of Christ is needed, and Christ is looking for

men who will help in this programme of founding a Kingdom of God on earth. He gives strength where there is weakness, courage where there is cowardice, beauty where there are ashes, victory where there is defeat, and a close study of His life and teaching as well as the lives and teachings of the great saints of India and all the world will give us that impetus that is needed for moving this world onward and upward.

VIRASAIVISM

(THE RELIGION OF THE LINGAYETS)

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AN UNWRITTEN CHAPTER

The subject of my present discourse constitutes an unwritten chapter in the Religious History of India as no serious endeavour has, as yet, been made to give to the educated public a connected conspectus of the history, the philosophy and the literature of the Virāśaiva Religion which, as a distinct branch of that great and ancient Śaiva Siddhānta school, has played no mean part in our national and religious life and which has contributed not a little to the greatness of religious India.

A PHASE IN THE EVOLUTION OF ŚAIVISM

Mr. R. C. C. Carr is not far wide of the mark when he says of the Lingāyets that “~~their~~ faith purports to be the primitive Hindu faith, cleared of all priestly mysticism.” In my view, it represents a distinct phase in the evolution of the Vedic Hindu Religion. It was once held that the cult of Śiva worship was derived from the crude demonology of the South Indian aboriginal tribes. But this theory has been brushed aside as a long discredited story and the most commonly accepted view is that immediately after (or even synchronizing with) the pantheistic conception in the evolution of Aryan thought came in the conception of the worship of Śiva as the supreme deity. The primitive

Aryan of the Rig-Vedic period worshipped Śiva (then called Rudra) both as a thunder-God and as a benevolent deity driving away all sorrow. The next stage in the evolution is monotheism when all the deities of the *Rig-Veda*, namely, Indra, Agni, Yama, Varuṇa, etc., are absorbed in the personality of Rudra who is now called expressly Īśa, Śiva, etc. in the *Yajur-Veda* which declares that "God is one and no second and that one God is Rudra." Thus, by this time when the Upanishads came to be composed, Śiva was identified with the '*Para-Brahman*' of the Upanishads.

It is interesting to note that the history of Hinduism is one of incessant struggles between conservative elements and ritualism on the one hand, and liberalizing and humanizing forces and spiritualism on the other, each school having its turn of triumph at one time or the other. The well-known dispute between Yājñavalkya and Vaiśampāyana, the schism between Vasishṭha and Viśvāmitra, and the rise of Jainism and Buddhism, are but distinct indications of the growth of humanistic cult in the Hindu religion. Virasaivism represents one such phase in this evolution.

ĀGAMAS

By the time the Upanishads were begun to be composed, there seems to have arisen a cleavage among the original compilers, some of them seceding away from the bulk, condemning the animal sacrifice that was then in vogue and giving a spiritual interpretation to the sacrifice to be offered to Lord Śiva. This marks the highest stage in the evolution of the Aryan thought when was expounded the sublime doctrine of the Vedānta describing the mystic relation between the soul and the universal spirit and the ultimate absorption of the two. It was at this time that the Āgamas and the Upanishads branched out from the same system of the Vedic tree and became the bases of a number of cults and creeds. The Āgamas like the Upanishads enjoined the worship of one God, gave spiritual significance to the sacrificial rites and taught that the true salvation lies in self-renunciation and the dedication of the self to the universal soul, Lord Śiva. This doctrine of the dedication of the self to Lord Śiva is the foundation of all the schools of the Śaivite philosophy and is the very

essence of the Virāśaiva philosophy. Āgamanta giving the true interpretation of the *Advaita* philosophy of the Upanishads expounds the highest monistic knowledge, a system, which is at once *Dvaita* and *Advaita*. According to the Śaiva philosophy the term '*Advaita*' means neither one, nor two nor neither. It is both a system of dualism and of non-dualism but differing from both the recognized schools of those names. The *jīva* emancipating from *pāśa* or the worldly bondage draws nearer and nearer to *Paramātman* wearing away atom by atom till it is one with Him. The same idea is conveyed by the word '*Upanishad*' (*upa*=near, *ni*=quite, *shat*=perish). As man nears God he wears away atom by atom, so that at the moment of Union, nothing of him is left and what is left is the Presence of the Supreme One only and the feeling of His Presence and no feeling or consciousness of feeling of himself or others. This feeling of the Presence and Bliss of God is one and *Advaita*. Such an identity is the form of the ecstatic condition of the mind which *yogins* feel. As Saint Mey Kaṇḍan says: "The word '*Advaita*' cannot mean Oneness or *Ekam* ; no one can think of himself as one and the very thought implies two." The word simply denies the separateness of the two, '*anyanāsti*' and hence God is said to be one with the souls. Thus, the Āgamanta harmonizes these two systems of thought—*Dvaita* and *Advaita* in strict conformity with the principles of the Upanishads.

Another characteristic feature of the Āgamanta school is that it does not rest content by merely expounding abstract theories. On the other hand, it is a practical religion laying out a thoroughly reasoned system of practical philosophy neither contradicting our experience, nor causing violence to the most cherished of our sentiments, both moral and religious, a system of thought which was progressive and built on an adamantine basis, step by step, leading to higher knowledge. Thus, the two cardinal principles of the Āgamanta school, namely, the progressive realization of the self and its dedication to the Universal Soul constitute the basic foundation of

THE CULT OF LINGA WORSHIP

which distinguishes the Virāśaivas. The worship of *linga* which

is invariably a matter of daily observance with all the Liṅgāyets, rich or poor, high or low, learned or unlearned, male or female is but a symbolic exposition of the progress of the soul and its communion with God. Various theories have been put forth regarding the exact significance of this symbol. According to one theory *Siva-liṅga* is symbolic of the *Sabda-Brahman*, the *Pranava*, "Aum" from which has emanated the whole universe. *Liṅga*, as *Pranava* figured to the eye, becomes the universal symbol of God, and object of worship as the *Pranava* in *mantra* or Sound form was before. According to *Tirumantram*, "The whole *liṅga* is the *Oṃkāra* filled by *Nāda* and *Bindu*. The base is 'A,' the *kantha* is 'M,' and the round form is 'U.' According to *Ajitāgama*, *liṅga* represents *Pati* (or *Śiva*), *paśu* (or *jīva*) and the *pāśa* (or the relation between the two). Swami Vivekananda tells us that the worship of the *Siva-liṅga* originated from the story of the famous *Mahā-liṅga* in the *Atharva-Veda Samhitā* in the place of the *yūpastambha* which was beginningless and endless and which thus represented the Eternal Brahman. As has been pointed out already, those, who discarded animal sacrifice, and dissented from the *karṇṭu-vādins* retained still, the same ceremonial forms and the same *mantras* for new purposes with highly spiritual significance. The idea of sacrifice could not be completely effaced out of their memory. But it is not the horse or the goat but our grosser self that should be sacrificed. It must be forgotten that in the Rig-Vedic time *Śiva* was assigned the chief place in the sacrifice and was '*Medha-pati*.' He was represented by the sacrificial post which was held in high reverence as the Eternal Brahman. The dissenters in their new form of worship worked out the same idea of identifying the *yūpastambha* with *Para-Brahman* Who has the whole earth as His seat, the blue sky as His crown, and the Universe as His vesture. To this *Medha-pati*, the *liṅga*, the symbol of Lord *Śiva* should one offer one's self in sacrifice and thus become one with Him. It may be noted that the *Śiva* temples are built on the model of *yajña-sālā*, and the great *liṅga* of *Drākshārāma* fully bears testimony to this theory. Thus, the worship of *Siva-liṅga* signifies self-sacrifice and this idea of self-sacrifice, as already

pointed out, is the centre of the Saivaite Philosophy. Lord Siva, characterized in the Upanishads as '*Sivam, Sāntam*' etc. is designated as '*Sthala*' from which all things shoot out and into which all things are absorbed finally. The word '*liṅga*' connotes the same idea and denotes the same object. The Divine Energy or the consciousness of the self is known as *Śakti* or *Prakṛiti* which has two aspects, '*Vibhāga Parāmarśa*' and the '*Avibhāga Parāmarśa*.' The *Avibhāga Parāmarśa Śakti* is Lord himself containing the whole universe within Himself and enjoying all in all in a state of Absolute Bliss. While the Lord is in this state of perfect *Advaita*, the *Śakti* which has no separate existence is called *Chit-Śakti* and *Ānanda-Śakti*. But, when there is a natural Desire or '*Lilā*' the *Ichhā-Śakti* comes into play and creates in the Lord a desire that there should be creation of the universe (*Eko'ham bahusyām*), "I am One. Let there be Many." It is soon followed by *Jñāna-Śakti*, the knowledge of the Matter, and *Kriyā-Śakti*, the exhibition of this universe.

The same spirit of Egoism which effected this differentiation widens the gulf between *Paramātman* and *jīvātman* until in the long run *jīvātman* while passing through the stages of desire, irresolution etc. reaches, at last, the stage of Profound Ignorance and completely loses itself in self-forgetfulness. So long as the remembrance of its past history and its degradation does not trouble its thought, the soul wanders aimlessly in this humdrum world as the bond slave of Nature, regarding the mundane affairs as being of permanent value. But once it is reminded, through revelation of its original state of perfection, it would pine away for the reunion with the Almighty, even as a love-lorn maid languishes for the love of her *prema-nāyaka* from whom she has been separated for a long time. The soul then, would resort to various means to dissociate itself from mundane thoughts and to concentrate its attention upon the Divine Lover. By a close contact with Nature, it acquires a detailed and minute knowledge of its constitution, injunction and laws and thus of its own '*aṅga*' in which it is embodied and which is but a minified copy or the replica of the outer nature. Having thus gained knowledge of Nature and of its body it would bring into play the spark of the

Divine Energy and would gradually work out its disentanglement from the meshes of Nature. The first stage towards this disentanglement is the concentration of the Mind which is attained by the control and conquest of the various *vāyus* in our earthly body that ever perturb our mind. This concentration of the mind and the subsequent conquest of the five *indriyas* are achieved by a constant meditation and gazing upon a brilliant object which is identified with *Para-Brahman*. This shining object is our '*Ishta liṅga*' which we wear on our body for ever, even as a true *sañi* wears on her person some love-token which would ever be bringing before her mind's eye the lovely form of her lord and which would induce her to meditate always upon the reunion with her lord without paying heed to other circumstances which are likely to tempt and delude her. Thus *Liṅga* which is the Absolute Being from which all things emerge out and into which all things perish is the combination of *Purusha* and *Prakṛiti*, of *Śiva* and *Vishnu*. Hence, the saying '*Sivavishnumayaṁ*.' In the famous *Mahā-vākya* of the *Chhāndogya Upanishad*, '*Tattvam-asi*'—(That Thou Art)—*ai* stands for *liṅga*. *tvam* for *aṅga* and the reunion between the two is designated by the term '*asi*' which is *Śiva-jīva-aikya* or the *liṅga-aṅga-sāmarasya*. It is this *Śiva-liṅga* that reminds the wearer of the eternal and living touch of the Lord upon his body which would make him abstain from all impure actions, which might render his body unworthy to be the seat of the Lord. The saying of the *Skan-lopanishad* that this body is the living temple of the Lord—'*Deho devālayam*' has been literally carried out by the practice of the wearing of the *liṅga*, which is but a symbol reminding us of the original state of perfect beauty, perfect goodness and perfect truth.

Thus, the three categories recognized by the Virāśaiva Philosophy are Nature, soul and Spirit. The entire economy of the present Dispensation is under the active control of the Spirit and is especially designed by Him in view of the Emancipation of the soul. Nature is multi-coloured and many-vestured and is the material cause of not only the outer universe, which hides within the immensity of its bosom, countless hosts of sidereal systems, but also our body, with all its grosser and subtler divisions

and components, its instrument of knowledge and action, its proclivities and tendencies in which the soul lives as in a cottage. The Spirit is immanent in both Nature and soul and is in fact the guiding principle. He is thus the soul's Soul. It is not in the power of the soul to lead an independent existence ; either it must remain in unwitting communion with Nature, over-powered by her blandishments or in conspicuous fellowship with the Spirit—an intermediate stage being thus practically denied to it. If it ceases to gravitate towards Nature it must lean on to the Spirit. The *Samsāra-chakra* is the soul's orbit, which represents the resultant of two forces continually acting upon it. The soul has the ability to know both Nature and Spirit as it is possessed of the element which it shares in common with the spirit. The soul ordinarily sees in itself either Nature or Spirit but not its own form. It is beginninglessly entangled in the fascination of Nature and the Spirit carries on its work solely to disentangle the soul from those fascinations. The universe that we see around us has Nature for its material cause, the Spirit for its efficient cause and His body of pure sentient energy for its instrumental cause. Nature is especially superintended by the Spirit, in order that she albeit insentient, may the more rigorously and consistently exhibit the law of desert and causality, in relation to the soul. The Law of causation is really the inherent and external property of Nature. As long as the soul chooses to enjoy the company of Nature, so long will her law of causality and desert hold the soul tight within its meshes. But her connection with the soul is, after all, but temporary though she is, by herself, eternal. It is also possessed of an ingrained perversity that is inherited from Nature and hence eventually eradicable whereby it mistakes sensuous or sensual revelling " in the lap of Nature " for its appointed Goal, and thus converts its spirit-given instruments of emancipation formed out of Nature, into effective engines of its own perdition. The award of spiritual freedom is always made by the Spirit to the soul by an act of grace, and when the moment for that award (which involves a complete emancipation from its bondage to Nature) has arrived, the Spirit reveals himself to the soul in any manner He pleases and blesses it with His Eternal Fellowship of ineffable power and joy.

The Spirit is an embodiment of love and compassion and is nothing but Life, Light and Love. Nature is the Spirit-appointed material instrument of soul's salvation ; the Spirit requires the soul to seek its emancipation only by wedding Nature and thereby passing the ordeal of causality. Nature proves successively a seducer, a task-master and a servant in relation to the soul, in accordance with the degree of spiritual progress attained by it.

The soul's state of bondage has no beginning but has an end, while the soul's spiritual freedom has a definite beginning but no end. Nature, if kept at her proper vocation as an obedient hand-maid of Spirit-ward-bound soul, is full of beauty and symbolic of heart's purity, innocence and joy, the Divine Beauty, the Divine Loneliness and the Divine Harmony.

The true relation between the soul, the Spirit and Nature is brought home in a beautiful analogy (by the famous Śaiva Saint, Meykaṇḍan) of an apple hanging on the branch of a tree, subject to two diverse forces—the force of gravitation and the force of the tree holding the apple firmly.

Why does an apple fall to the ground? The tree holds up the object of its own force. When this force is weakened and loosened, another force is brought into play—the force of the earth or gravity. The object was in fact held in between these two forces. The object must either be attached to the earth or be brought to the ground. In spite of the enormous power of gravitation of the earth the tree was able to hold up the object for a time—only for a time ; for when the fruit matures, the tree cannot hold it up, however it may will to do so. The same act accomplishes the severance from the tree and the bringing to the earth. The soul is bound to *Māyā* so long as it is not ripe. Before it is ripe we do not perceive its brightness and sweetness. When the soul perfects itself fed by the juice from the earth (the grace of God) it finds its resting place in God. When it so finds itself united it becomes one with God as the fruit itself when left alone becomes one with the earth.

When in union with God the soul loses not merely the consciousness of the world, the *asaṭ*, it loses also its self-consciousness (not its self-being) and the only perception that remains is

the bare perception, the bare enjoyment of God, the full manifestation of the presence of God and Bliss and in such condition alone can one say that there is no second thing.

Thus, it can be seen that the Viraśaiva philosophy which is technically termed "*Viśeṣha-Advaita*" or *Sakti-Viśiṣṭa-Advaita*" is essentially different from the *Advaita* of the school of Śrī Saṅkarācārya. Viraśaiva philosophy does not countenance the *Māyāvāda* theory of the *Advaita school*. It does not shun worldly existence as being mere illusion. It does not set forth the distinction of a higher and lower knowledge of Brahman. It gives great prominence to the *Bhakti* cult, and it is in consonance with the teaching of the Upanishads themselves.

This outlook on life as taught by the Viraśaiva philosophy is responsible for some of the catholic features of that religion which are brought into prominence in the famous sayings of Śrī Basaveśvara, the greatest exponent of the Liṅgāyet faith. No caste-distinction is recognized among the Liṅgāyets. The high position that is allotted to the fair sex is a pleasing feature of this community. The mode of daily worship that is enjoined is very simple and is symbolic of the communion of the individual soul with the Universal Soul. *Dayā* or tender feeling to all living beings is deemed to be the basic foundation of all religions and cruelty in any form is vehemently condemned. The sayings of Basaveśvara which are couched in simple, beautiful and terse Canarese language are but the echo of the famous Upanishadic teachings. Basaveśvara was one of the foremost religious Reformers who brought to the masses the rich treasures of the Upanishadic culture. His position among the great savants of Hinduism is unique and his message of love and hope has left its lasting effect on the Karnāṭaka and its surrounding regions where millions and millions of people are following this faith.

I shall close this brief discourse by quoting the following beautiful lines by our great national poet singing of the universal harmony and concord:—

"When one knows Thee, then alien there is none, then no door is shut. Oh! grant me my prayer that I may never lose the bliss of the touch of the ONE in the play of the MANY."

RELIGION IN INDIA

(A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS
OF THE RELIGIONS OF INDIA)

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The religions of India fundamentally differ from the religions of the rest of the world. Every Indian religion is a system of principles, scientific, philosophical and spiritual. It is no formal frame of faith. It is a practical ideal that is to be achieved and realised in life through a process of practice, of thought and emotion making up a progressive programme. The element of vacantly expectant faith is in fact absent from it. Its way is to work and attain and grow and go up. In every Indian religion there is an organic principle by pursuing which one is to reach an attitude of mind in which it is possible to distinguish between truth and appearance, between *Brahman* and *Māyā*, between soul and her enfoldment consisting of the blend of the intellect, ego, mind and life. Every Indian religion is a course of stern discipline the purpose of which is to relax, to dissolve and ultimately to do away with this anti-spiritual wrappage of body and mind and to emancipate the soul to start on her resplendent course of eternal life which is all wisdom, all power and all bliss. It must be an accomplishment here in this life and not merely an uncertain hope for the future.

In India a religious life is a spiritual evolution, a hyper-natural constitution. The materials of this inner life-building are supplied by the soul. The duty of the intellect is to remove the physico-mental obstacles, all created by sense-desire. The most important feature of Indian spiritual psychology is the clearest recognition of the subtly duplicate nature of human life, the double aspect of sense and soul, of terrestrial and celestial, of animal and angelic. The two seem to be inter-transfused. But the two forces work asunder. The soul is never touched by sense—so we read of

Purusha (the soul) in the Indian Scriptures. It is the sympathy (*pratisamvedana*) of the soul for Nature that does all the harm. The soul in imagination receives the brightly energizing nature into her bosom and mistakingly holds herself responsible for the vagaries of vanities of mind and body that are of Nature. The aim of religion is to put an end to this infatuation (*moha*) of soul and to wake her up to a consciousness of her true self. Every religiously educated Indian Hindu is constantly cognizant of the inner fact of life ; he is a spiritual scientist; a practical philosopher : he does never walk in any dark haze of ignorant faith.

The characteristics of Religion that I have just mentioned are, however, not the only distinguishing features of the religions which go by the name of *Sanātana-Dharma* popularly known as Hinduism. There they are as organic factors of a philosophical system while in the non-Indian religions they are simply recognized in many irregular empirical ways.

I have spoken of Truth and Appearance. Truth is of course God. Appearance is the Universe. The Universe is no phantom. There are eternal forces underlying and projecting the universe. They are many; but all spring from three fundamental forces. The modern sciences of physics and chemistry have broken up the material universe and reduced it to varying forms of electric energy the wonderful results of the study of which running up to the astonishing analysis of the atom are accessible to us in the works of Einstein, Max Planck and other eminent scientists of today. This electric energy or rather the essential secret of this is the Indian Rishi's *rajas* which supplies the mighty motive forces of the universe. There is another that is equally but negatively powerful, that counteracts all motive force and tends to rest in what is really inertia. It is called *tamas*. The third that is called *sattva* is harmony and translucence opening up ways or windows for the rays of Divine consciousness, the *Chit*-process to come and work in the intellect, the ego-sense and the mind and all their ever-current activities which, so vaguely understood by the European psychologists, are doors and windows furnished by the *sattva*-power which is the fundamental basis of moral life. These

three forces or *gunas* are one inextricable whole and constitute *Māyā* which, viewed differently, receives different names such as *Prakṛiti*, *Pradhāna*, *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*. This *Māyā* is God's external Nature, really a centrifugal reflection, an outward projection of His impersonal power. Besides these two aspects of Divinity, viz. *Brahman* and *Māyā*, there are three other great creative forces. One is known as *jīva-śakti* or soul-power. It is that by which God *originates* the individual souls, the living spirits, of gods, demi-gods, men, beasts, birds, insects, plants and all that has life. This is intermediate between God and *Māyā*. The fourth is *kāla-śakti* or time-power which gives rise to change and starts the endless process of creation. The fifth is *karma-śakti* or power of the law of cause and effect which carries on the principle that every act or thought or feeling must be followed by its exact consequence. The entire universe of life and of course the whole world of mankind is governed by God's *karma*-power. The string of *karma*-consequences is terribly tenacious and does not snap at death and why should it? It continues and forces its way through millions of years. The Law of *Karma* makes every individual, every nation and the whole world of mankind responsible for his or its destiny, for his or its birth and death. This leads us on to the great doctrine of rebirth known in Europe as transmigration of soul. No law of life is so vital, so fundamental as this. The solution of all intricate problems of human life is inextricably involved in the mighty law of re-birth. No wonder is more wonderful than that this law of all laws of life should excite nothing more than a passing intellectual curiosity in Europe. The first principle that every human thinker should realize and accept as most essentially true is the successive incarnation of the soul. Birth and death and sorrow and suffering and the bewildering differences of character and fate are absolutely inexplicable without reference to the Law of *Karma* and the consequent chain of births and deaths. The significance of man's life is deepened and its range extended a thousandfold by the acceptance of this law and so impoverished by its rejection.

We are speaking of the five greatest forces of Divinity of which the wonderful unity is never lost sight of in the Indian Scriptures.

The understanding of unity runs side by side with that of multiplicity which is its natural expression. The endless procession of human life through ceaseless birth and death is bound up with the never-ending progress of the universe through its ever-alternating evolution and involution, of creation and annihilation so-called, so brilliantly related in the Scriptures. What a deplorable misrepresentation of divine Fact it is to state that God created the universe at a certain point of time and destroyed the same after *some time* in pursuance of course of a whim! The questions of why and how and of what substance ought to be answered by Religion. All these questions stand answered or are made irrelevant beside the supreme conception of an eternal cycle of *kalpas* and *kalpāntaras*, of aeons of evolutions and involutions. This dynamic conception of the never-ending course of creation ever alternating with dissolution is sure to liberate the imagination from the cramp of the idea of a capricious creation.

This naturally introduces us to the great problem of the conception of God and Divine Power. Moral and intellectual abstraction has played a momentous and most harmful part in this matter and has always hidden away the truth of God. Man is or is not good. God is absolutely good. Man is or is not just. God is all justice. Man knows a little. His ignorance is great. God is Omniscient. Man is here and not there. God is everywhere. Man can create this or that thing, a motor-car, a pontoon bridge, a palace or a city. God has created the universe. He is Omnipotent. And so on. The non-Indian religions have conceived of God in this fashion. There has not been any revelation in this respect. This is miserable anthropomorphism worse than that which is charged against Hinduism. The Indian conceptions of God are profoundly scientific and are apt to force their way into the heart of everybody whose mind is untarnished by petrified prejudices. It is necessary to devote many a volume to a satisfactory treatment of this great subject. Some exceedingly faint idea only can be given here, if at all, of this. We should first of all bear in mind that God is the great ground of reconciliation for all contradictory and wildly wandering conceptions. Nothing can be more unpardonable than narrowness, or conventionality or

fixity of views in this respect. No one or two or three or twenty conceptions of God can be sufficient for the comprehension of the Divine Reality. In the Indian Scriptures which are countless we come across hundreds of conceptions of God revealing hundreds of aspects, hundreds of powers and hundreds of processes of manifestation. There is no end to these features and facets and colours.

What other religions have done in framing conceptions of God is by variously explaining away or eliminating or abstracting out and abnegating the manifold facts of human life under the dread of a ghostly anthropomorphism. And what have they achieved is a shapeless and contentless immensity of an all-pervading abstraction-shadow. In this vast, starless, suffocating firmament of moral and intellectual inanity the world outside India has obtained one great relief, one stream of thirst-appeasing *amṛita* (nectar)—I mean, the glorious appearance of Jesus Christ in the horizon of man's religious life. But what a terrible stagnation of idea and imagination has been committed by the European ecclesiastics even about the ever-living Jesus!

There have been abstract conceptions of the Godhead even in India though not on anthropomorphic lines and there are people who like to cling to them. But concrete realistic conception of the Supreme Being and of the eternal facts of divine life has always been the way of the Indian Religion. Revelation, philosophy, science and super-psychic culture of great individuals have all contributed to the fulfilment of the various conceptions of God that have been in India. The European sciences are all concerned with the material universe. Europe possesses no spiritual science. The semi-spiritual culture that she has empirically pursued has always deflected her from the path leading to the Kingdom of God. Beyond the jurisdiction of her material science the great disease of Europe is abstract or sentimental speculation that is sure to lead her astray. All great European authors with spiritual purposes suffer from this. This is because in Europe there is no idea of what Indians call *Adhyātma-Yoga* or super-intellectual culture practised through suspension of mental processes and even of the higher intellectual functions, through utter abnegation of the

so-called mental or psycho-physical system. None should forget the great distinction between the sense-science of Europe and the Soul-science or *Chit-vijñāna* of India.

All that the world has known of Indian philosophy and religion from the *Advaita-Vedānta* of Śaṅkarācārya is only a small fragment of the inexhaustible philosophico-religious stores of India. The first important piece of revelational information that is to be proclaimed to the world is that beyond and even within the mutable material universe of change and mortality there is an infinite universe of immortal love and beauty that is eternal and ever new, that is beyond even all that which is known to modern theosophy. This is called the *tripad-vibhūti* of *Para-Brahman* everlastingly shining in a resplendent firmament called *Para-Vyoma* or hyper-firmament of eternal Intelligence-Light. That is the eternal Abode of God who is in His inmost self-essence a Person constituted of all-Truth, all-Intelligence and all-Love-and-Beauty-and-Bliss. Within Himself He is an eternal Impulse of Love. This mighty tendency of Love differentiates and reproduces and impersonates Him in an endless series of Individuals who are the personiformed rays of the central Sun of God. They become wonderfully beautiful males and females, each an embodied force of love and light and beauty, all entering into the loveliest relations of father and mother and son and daughter and friend and master and servant and above all, darling *dramatis personae* in a complex drama of Love. This is called *Līlā* (divine play). God's eternal Integrity remaining intact, He breaks Himself up by means of a magic power of His known as *Yoga-Māyā* and becomes as many as He wants to fulfil His *Līlā* of Love. This is in the holiest Heaven, the most secret *sanctum sanctorum*. The name of the most Supreme God is Kṛishṇa on account of the inconceivable magnetic and attractive force of His infinite Love. He reveals a reflection of His *Līlā* successively to the great circle of the worlds of the universe that is there.

The loving associates of God carrying out the processes of His *Līlā* are one in their essence with God and are in God; but still they are individually different from Him. They are higher than the gods and angels who are of the secondary *jīva-śakti* and belong

to the lower Heavens which perish with their inhabitants at the final *pralaya* or annihilation, to be created, that is reproduced, with the coming of the new universe. Even apart from the *reflective* associates of God, God Himself is many in one and one in many. The Indian unity of God is not an empty abstraction. It is an intensely concrete and living realization. God is one, even a child should know that. It is impossible that there should be more than one. But who is there to rob Him of His inherent right to become many? The fact is that He cannot but be many. He possesses multifarious powers and aspects. They are not abstract as man's powers. His powers are in themselves Persons. He is a different Person by a different power. They can never get confused or transfused, They are eternally distinct. The *Avatāras* who are wrongly called incarnations are some of these individual Selves of God. These God-Selves or *Bhagavat-svarūpas* have got their proper shapes and bodies of immortal divine essence, proper character and function. They are all loving and lovely and of course omniscient and omnipotent. Emanuel Swedenborg, the great Swedish scientist, philosopher and saint obtained a glimpse of this greatest truth of Divinity as we find in his *Divine Love and Wisdom*. Conventional terms like monotheism and polytheism have got no meaning whatsoever in regard to the religions of India.

In this connection we should turn our attention to a most important feature of the Indian religions. We may call this the *hypostatic* principle, borrowing an expression from Christian theology where it is used within an exceedingly narrow compass. According to this every power of God and every force of Nature has got a *personal subsistence*. I have already spoken of the personal character of Divine powers. Nature's forces are also personal: they are distinct individuals as God's intermediate power of forming individual souls is all-pervading. Thus the sun, the moon, every planet and star, mountains, rivers and plants and even diseases are ruled by differently constituted spirits. This is not mythology. It is philosophy and actual science. The idea expressed by the term mythology is itself a myth. The Greek mythology was nearer Truth than many a theology so-called.

Christianity did incalculable harm to the cause of religion by suppressing the ancient religion of Greece. The universe is pervaded by myriads of intelligent spirits who are individualized rays of the Divine reflective light. It is the first duty of every religion to recognize this truth. To understand this thoroughly one must study the subtle processes of creation or creative evolution so elaborately described in the Purāṇas.

The intricate system of principles and laws which produce the universe and ever sustain it are known as the Vedas. God willed the ordering of the twenty-four primary principles or *tattvas* of cosmic life. The principles are: (1) the primordial base of the psycho-physical life called *chitta*; (2) the original ego-sense or *ahaṅkāra*; (3) the perception and desire faculty or *manas*; (4) the intellect or the faculty of decision, the *buddhi*; (5-9) the central vital forces or *prāṇas*; (10-14) the five senses of perception; (15-19) the five organs of action; (20-24) the five elements, subtle and gross; the universe is nothing but a wonderful composition of these. They are organic non-intelligent parts of the manifesting that is self-evolving spirit of nature *informed* by the intelligence-radiance of God. The former, that is the non-intelligent, conglomerate themselves into a huge golden Embryo of the universe and the latter, that is the intelligent, is embodied by God as Brahman who is the divine fountain-head of the countless life-forces of the universe. He is the all-Soul, really Emerson's Oversoul. He creates all things and all lives by His creative Intelligence impinging upon and breaking up the stupendous Embryo layer by layer and stage by stage. The great problems of life which modern science has utterly failed to manipulate have all got their solutions or suggestions of them in the scientific accounts of creation which occur variously in the Purāṇas. I can only refer to them. They are all revelations but easily lend themselves to scientific and philosophical comprehension. Most of the fruitless speculation, most of the aimless wandering of hypothetical imagination that is there in the world might be spared by simple reference to this.

The Scriptures of the world have all recoiled before the triumphant march of modern science. The greatest men of modern science are admitting today that science has utterly failed

to discover truth. Reality has receded farther and farther back before the proud progress of science. The Indian Scriptures—the Upanishads, the Purāṇas, the Smṛitis and the Tantras—begin to stretch and ascend to the sky from where the sciences halt. The mysterious truth of life, the Protean shapes of which science wanted in vain to reveal, is embodied in the Indian Scriptures. It is there with its myriad appearances as well as its essential elements and far ranging meanings and bearings. The quickening rays of wisdom which radiate from the Indian scriptures are alone competent to illuminate the obscure passages of modern science. Europe has committed a fatal mistake in regarding the Purāṇas as mythological, as fantastic fiction. The Purāṇas are the greatest and most abundant store-houses of supreme knowledge of wonderful truths of Life which are beyond the farthest range of material science. It is no mythology. Europe embraces many superstitions concerning her views of the Indian Religions. There is *some* meaning in Darwin's Theory of Evolution. But the whole truth is in the Purāṇas. His speculation about the descent of man is a half-truth, if not preposterously wrong. For a deeper conception and a clearer exposition of Einstein's Theory of Relativity with its fourth dimension of time the philosopher should investigate the Purāṇas. The origin of life, the change of matter to intelligent emotion has ever been a stumbling-block for European science. It is a commonplace of the all-illuminating Purāṇic science of life. The fact is that the view of the universe that is offered by modern science is narrow and superficial. The inner issues are all neglected. Really science has got no capacity to seek the inner powers, being all concerned with sense. The universe is not entirely an affair of sense. Every inch of it is penetrated by intelligent spiritual forces which are perceptible to senses to be developed by transcending the natural senses through a practical process of spiritual culture of which the secrets are known to the Indians alone. The Purāṇic revelation of this has given rise to the enormous Pantheon of India. The vicious English word 'mythology' has always produced a pernicious effect upon the scientific understanding of the world.

The scientist's inductive method of thought cannot but be

most misleading when applied to matters of Divine truth. Induction, inference, generalization, hypothetical rationalization and all those common processes of scientific pursuit are utterly inapplicable to spiritual things. They have always blocked the ways that should lead to the universe of God. They have blinded the inner eye of mankind. In India the stream of spiritual investigation has ever flowed within, never without—to the inner universe of spirit, never to the outer world of matter. The universal station that connects all telegraphic lines of Truth is situated in the heart on the marge of which sits the intellect. Nothing can be truly known without consulting the heart which holds in its little firmament of light the *essential* cosmos of the universal whole. It may be the farthest star or the nearest plant. Its meaning is in the heart from which the soul reaches both God and the world. This profound truth of life that is taught by the Indian religions has never been fully realized by Europe on account of her spiritual incompetence.

The life of mankind is a remote reflection projected into the infinite shadow of what is known as *Māyā*. It is, however, a distorted reflection apparently split up into incongruous fragments of facts, specially in the universe of human life. It is variously obscured by the changing shadows of the nescience of *Māyā*. If it could be thoroughly purified, etheralized and spiritualized, it might give some distinct idea of the resplendent universe of God, of Brahma-*dhāma* and Krishna-*Līlā*. The tremendous difference between human life and God's *Līlā*-Life is due to the fact that the one is ruled by selfish and ignorant desire, and the other is composed of and governed by ~~supre~~ supreme love and perfect wisdom. The fundamental essence is the same in both. There is nothing chimerical in the Kingdom of God. It is no empty sky infinite. It is no vacant expansion of formless Light Divine. To suppose it to be an imaginative imitation, an idealized reproduction of worldly life is to reverse the truth, which is that the Divine Artist created the world by remotely remodelling it on His own Kingdom. It is a wonderfully inhabited world, eternally vibrating with lovely radiant movements of creative Love. It is the infinite fountain-head of all Life, that is and will ever be. The Indian

Scriptures place this truth of all truths beyond the farthest reach of sceptic doubt.

The world knows something of the magnificence and sovereignty of God but very little of His love, loveliness and beauty. God's eternal *Lilā*-life is an affair entirely of His Love and Beauty. The question of divine justice arises only in connection with the sinful world of man. In the divine Dominion of all-ruling love justice is meaningless as vice is impossible. God's own Life that is *Lilā* has got three different atmospheres. (1) It is in its eternal centre in the highest and the holiest Heaven beyond the heaven, the *Lilā*-life itself. (2) It is as revealed in succession to the worlds of the universe. (3) It is where God out of his infinite love manifests Himself in various lovely forms from time to time to those blessed persons who devote themselves heart and soul to His feet out of self-abnegating love.

It is not very difficult to ascertain what the world means by worship. It appears worship is nothing but praise and prayer for personal benefits. God is so great, so powerful: people admire Him therefore. God is so bounteous: people beg boons of Him. At the highest people seek salvation out of His mercy. This is in India as elsewhere. But in India this is not the whole of divine worship. It is a poor part of it. Worship must be loving service. Love for God is apt to shadow itself off into a vacant idea of honour unless it is substantiated by a concrete course of action as a direct expression of the underlying emotion. This is the rational basis of the Hindu forms of worship—of *Pūjā* or *Archanā*. It involves a certain beautiful process of offering those things to God which are the finest, sweetest, most valuable or most delicate; pure articles of food, flowers, perfumes, fair raiments, sandal-paste, saffron, musk and many an excellent thing which may convey one's heart's love to another. When these are expressions of sincere love they cannot fail to please the divine object of love, who is the loveliest person to deserve human love. The most important factor of the *Pūjā* ceremony is the *mantra*. The scriptural *mantras* are wonderful receptacles of stored-up spiritual energy. It instils life into the rites, actually electrifies the proceedings. The *mantras* are the most intimate parts of Revelation,

the real radiations of Divine Power. They are not formal formulas devised by idle-hearted Brahmins as they are supposed to be through ignorance. No account of Hinduism is of any value without a careful consideration of the *mantras* and their science. The Indian worship is not a subject to be dismissed with the name of ritual. It is a profound affair.

It is here that the great question of image-worship comes up. Image-worship is not idolatry: that is to be declared to the outside world with the greatest emphasis that is possible. In ancient Palestine and the surrounding Semitic lands God was only an Idea, an ordinarily conceived Power of justice and goodness ruling the destinies of mankind. He was formless, figureless and featureless never to become an object of human vision. An image of God was out of question. One having faith in God and walking in the ways of God could never worship any image. It was only Godless sinners or men thrown out of the path of true piety who made idle idols representing no religious ideas and worshipped them blindly and vainly. And hence there arose the opprobrium of idol-worship and hence it became an abomination. But Hindu image-worship is a holy illumination. It is bathed in the radiance of a living consciousness of the life-giving reality of God. It moves in an ethereal, spiritual atmosphere. The image is to the worship what the vapour-particles are to the rainbow, what the physical frame is to the spiritual system in a man, what, as Carlyle has expressed it, the symbol is to the idea of eternity.

The Hindus have got revealed to them from time immemorial splendidly-embodied *Svarūpa-mūrtis* or self-forms of God. They are the essential mystery-secrets of Divinity. They are eternal and infinite though super-human figures apparently. They are the Supreme Being, the Central Deity in His inmost Self-Reality. The revelation of this highest Truth is the greatest aspect of the Indian Religion. This is no human imagination. It is a Divine Fact. Evidences and testimonies to the intimate truth of this are innumerable and are recorded in the *Purāṇas*. Image is inevitable when the substance is there. The image represents the living substantial Idea. In the mind of the worshipper the image almost disappears; the love-electrified Idea embodies itself and takes the

place of the image. This is Hindu worship and true worship cannot be anything but this. All that which prevails in the outside world is mere reverence for an uncertain Idea doing duty for Divinity. Nothing is more valuable, more intimately religious, in India than the exquisite system of worship which goes by the name of image-worship and which is outrageously supposed to be idolatry.

The world knows something of the great doctrine of divine Incarnation so-called, I should say of the great Fact of the *Avatāras*, Jesus Christ is an *Avatāra* of God Himself—one of many. It is wrong to fix him in thought into an immovable singularity. Christianity suffers thereby. The greatest features of the Indian Religion are: (1) The law of re-birth or re-incarnation; (2) the all-illuminating spiritual science and personal realization instead of conventional faith; (3) the dynamic character of every religious conception that is there; (4) the eternity of the process of creation and annihilation, the dynamic conception at every step; (5) the doctrine of divine powers and their hypostatic self-personation; (6) the science of the manifestation of gods and goddesses; (7) the doctrine of divine *incarnation* without end; (8) the science of the essentially divine character of every being; (9) the doctrine of God being a separate Self in each of His aspects; (10) the doctrine of the *Personal Embodiment* of the Divine Substance which is itself a Person supremely fascinating to gods, demons and men; (11) the preter-pantheistic doctrine that God is everything that is and at the same time beyond everything, beyond the remotest star, beyond space; (12) the practical course of science and discipline by which to prove in the test-room of the heart every doctrine and every law of religion that which is called *Adhyātma-Yoga* and *Bhakti-Yoga*; (13) the wonderfully efficacious system of worship that is followed in India; (14) the existence of many systems of philosophy which are the intellectual features of the great religion and are one with it unlike the philosophies of Europe which are systems of speculation which no man of religion cares to pursue as guiding signals of life; (15) it is the oldest religion in the world and at the same time stands beyond the range of intellectual imagination of many an Einstein still to come.

This is the faintest bird's-eye view of the all-comprehensive Indian religion many distorted shadows of which float at times down the casual winds of the intellectual sky of Europe.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF HINDUISM

SWAMI SHARVANANDA

Ramakrishna Mission

It is a well-known fact that all tenets and beliefs of religions rest upon a central Principle which is considered to be a super-sensuous, transcendental entity. With many a revealed religion which obtains today among the civilized peoples of the world, this transcendental Principle assumes the form of a Personality, and not unoften, of even an anthropomorphic kind; there are also a few religions which recognize It as a mere basic principle of the Cosmic Existence. All religions in their philosophical aspect seek to explain the visible or the concrete in terms of the Invisible and the Transcendental,—sometimes as Its derivatives or emanations, and sometimes as superficial aspects or misreadings.

These different attempts of the human mind to understand the Transcendental by relating It to the physical and the visible, is but a natural consequence of the evolution of the human mind. It presents but different aspects of the same truth from different angles of vision. The human mind begins with the conception of a Personal Being called God, existent as it were at the back of the whole cosmic process, and finally ends in the visualization of a Principle that is at once transcendental and immanent, nay even as a negation of the visible relative realities. In fact, all the different religions of the world can be grouped within this range. But the speciality of the philosophical background of Hinduism is that it includes the whole of this range through which the human mind is capable of passing—it comprises all the notes of the religious gamut which the human mind can produce. Although on the one hand Hinduism conceives of innumerable spiritual Personalities or Gods, to suit various minds, yet on the other, it

always asserts the fact that all these Personalities are of one "spiritual Substance." This conception of the Supreme spiritual Unity of God is as old in India as the *Rig-Veda*. Then again, these Personalities are sublimated to Spiritual Principles and ultimately to one Supreme Principle which is sometimes conceived as immanent and sometimes as transcendental. Practically speaking, Hinduism, therefore, presents three different aspects of the Supreme Reality, viz. the Personal, the Impersonal-Immanent and the Absolute, holding at the same time that all these three are but *aspects* of one and the same Reality. Hence in this respect Hinduism may be considered as a synthesis of all the religious philosophies of the world.

All religions essentially concern themselves with the practical life of man by formulating codes of conduct and spiritual disciplines to follow, so that he may ultimately attain the *summum bonum*—the supreme consummation of human life. It is sometimes described as heavenly attainment, sometimes as supreme perfection, sometimes as absolute freedom and sometimes as *Nirvāṇa* or annihilation of the empirical self. But the contents of all these conceptions are in essence the same; they all practically point to one single aspiration of the human soul and that is to transcend the limitations of environment and circumstances and get into a state of beatitude of sublime peace which is the natural craving of the soul. In this respect all religions are but the fulfilment of the natural spiritual urge in man, and the realization of that fulfilment must necessarily be dependent upon his being and becoming. Therefore religion is essentially practical, a process of becoming, a progressive realization. Hinduism, perhaps of all religions, is most emphatic on this point, viz. that true *religion is realization*. While other religions talk of this fulfilment or realization in another life, the grand Hereafter, Hinduism asserts that the realization even of the highest form of the Reality must be done here in this very life. It holds that religion based upon faith is a mere make-belief and cannot bring that consolation in life which real realization endows. Therefore in Hinduism the highest place of honour is accorded to the saints and seers, the mystics, who stand face to face with the Supreme Reality as it

were. And perhaps nowhere has arisen such a wonderful galaxy of innumerable mystics who corroborated, exemplified and empirically demonstrated the truths of religious realization from time immemorial as in India. Even today in this twentieth century, there is no dearth of such souls in this land. And these mystics have evolved a regular graduated psychological method well known as *yogic* processes, for the realization of that Supreme Truth. This is another distinguishing feature of Hinduism.

Further, it may be said in this connection that in formulating this scheme of *yogic* disciplines, all the different types of human mind and varying degrees of human capacities are taken into consideration, so that every individual can find a place in it and reach his goal by working up exactly from where he stands. In fact this scheme of disciplines has been made all-comprehensive and perfectly practical. Beginning from the crude form of symbol worship and prayer up to the most sublime forms of meditation and self-absorption in the superconscious state known as *samādhi*, the entire process of self-discipline is based upon psychological laws extremely helpful for the realization of the Supreme. So also as regards the practical part of religion. Hinduism presents a wonderful synthetic method of Self-realization or God-realization as prescribed in all other religions and even more. It should be remembered that it is the ritualistic aspect of religion that accentuates the differences between religion and religion in the popular mind and raises such a dust of apathy and hatred for each other, but when we try to understand the psychology behind all the rituals and ceremonials, we at once discern the common background on which these rest.

The third most important tenet of Hinduism is about man himself. As in its philosophy, the universe is considered to be an emanation from the Supreme Being and as such is not essentially separate from it, so also man in his spiritual essence is non-distinct from the Divine Principle. As the whole cosmic process is in a state of flux, moving towards the final absorption into its Primal Cause, so also human life is essentially a process of becoming and is moving towards the realization of its inherent divinity. In this way the whole of his biological and psychological evolution means

nothing more than the inner effort of the human soul to unfold its latent divinity and perfection by subjugating the physical environments. In short, man is potentially divine and his inner divinity has to be unfolded through the recognition and approximation of the perfect Divine Principle called God. Perhaps these doctrines of the unity of life and the divinity of man are the greatest contributions of Hinduism to humanity and are destined to save man from all the ailments the human society is suffering from today.

THE SIKH IDEAL

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I

Religion, as I understand it, has a twofold purpose in life, viz. (i) to teach man how to achieve salvation or self-realization or realization of God; and (ii) to teach him how to live in the world and build up his body and character. This second aspect of religion has been generally ignored so much so that there have been many good men and great who have starved their body and mental faculties with a view to reach God and that there are a very large number of men and women in all parts of the world who keep religion and life in water-tight compartments. On the other hand, the Sikh Gurus have laid a special emphasis on permeating the whole life with the spirit of religion and on the building up of both the body and the mind, the spirit and character, and developing all the qualities—human as well as divine—in a balanced, normal style. Sikhism does not believe in a lop-sided development. It aims at the harmonious and balanced development of all the faculties. It teaches man to live in the world and yet to live in such a way as to achieve the main purpose of human sojourn in the world and reach God—to live in the world not like a coward or a bully, nor like a self-seeking, selfish animal, but like a soldier and saint, brave and self-sacrificing,

loving and serving humanity, repeating the Name of God and perfecting himself and helping others to do the same. The Sikh Gurus have indeed placed before mankind a new and wonderfully balanced and noble human ideal, which I have described elsewhere as follows:

"The ideal Sikh is a man who is neither a religious recluse nor an avaricious man of the world, neither a believer in the doctrine of *ahimsā* nor a follower of the Bismarkian doctrine of blood and iron; but a man who is a remarkable amalgam of the saint and the man of the world who lives in the world and yet is not affected by it ; who is engaged in self-realization but who lives at the same time his life for others (the life of *paropākāra*), who does not shun worldly possessions or relations but is ever ready to sacrifice them all; who is meek and humble, gentle and non-violent, God-fearing and honourable on the one hand and brave, fierce and ruthless towards the enemies of Truth and the ravishers of humanity on the other ; who repeats the Name of the Lord and counts beads on his iron rosary with the one hand and kills the tyrants and the oppressors by his sword (*kirpan*) with the other ; who even at the time of fighting does not forget God but keeps on shouting *Sat Śrī Akāl* (God is True)—a man who is something more than a mere *sādhu* (monk) or a mere man of the world (a *grihastha* or householder) or a mere holy warrior (a crusader or fighter in *jihad*), he is a *Khalsa* (the Pure One), who does not believe in caste, colour, sex or credal differences, who believes in the Oneness of God and the Brotherhood of man, who endeavours to live a life of usefulness, charity and purity, who repeats the Name of the Lord himself and helps others to do the same, and who dedicates his life to God and the Gurus, to the service of humanity and to the protection of the weak and the oppressed".

II

Such an ideal is certainly very difficult of achievement, but, none the less, it is an eminently practical ideal—one which has been realized, after the Gurus, by a very large number of their followers. And let it be clearly understood that these disciples

were not exceptional men but came from practically the lowest strata of society. The Sikh Gurus recruited their disciples from persons whom some people in their pride of caste describe as untouchable and low-caste men, and they infused in them such an undying and purifying spirit that they became holy and brave, great and selfless heroes, who showed to the world what simple, sublime religious life can mean and how one can die in defence of faith and Truth, the weak and the oppressed. Those who drank the nectar (*amṛita*) or received the baptism initiated by Guru Govinda Singh became transformed—to use the picturesque language of a contemporary poet—"from sparrows into hawks" and "one of them could fight a lakh and a quarter". The spirit infused by the tenth Guru's baptism is indeed remarkable and the effect created is little short of miraculous. And let it be remembered that the heroism of the *Khalsa* is not a thing of the mythical past but a reality proved by events that are less than a score years old. The courage, forbearance, determination and discipline, the spirit of devotion, sacrifice and selflessness, and the acts of bravery, charity and humanity displayed by the Sikhs in their struggle for the freedom of their temples in the twenties of the present century extorted admiration from friends and foes alike. And it is being increasingly realized that the easiest and most successful solution of the terrible problem of the removal of untouchability from India, from both the socio-religious and psychological standpoints, is the administration of the uplifting Sikh baptism to the Harijans.

III

Sikhism is no respecter of man-made differences. The Sikh Gurus do not divide men into castes or *varṇas* nor do they divide human life into four parts or *āśramas*. They believe in devoting the whole life—in fact every minute of it—for the achievement of the goal—the conquest of the mind and the realization of God. At the same time they do not advise man to ignore the so-called worldly duties for the sake of spiritual progress. On the other hand they insist upon his leading a normal worldly life—living in the midst of his family and discharging his duties towards his wife

and children, his neighbours, his country and his fellow human-beings in general. It is a difficult path that the Gurus point out to man—to discharge all worldly responsibilities and at the same time to live a life of dedication and devotion, *smarana* and *bhakti*. Is it practicable? The examples of the Gurus and a host of Sikhs prove that it is. Sikhism is a pragmatic religion and is for the ordinary man, and the Gurus have never preached anything which they did not practise.

IV

What then is the way to reach God according to Sikhism?

The Gurus tell us that the road to the Abode of God (*Such Khand*) is long and arduous, there are no short cuts meant for the men of wealth, birth or influence. Every person, high or low, rich or poor, man or woman, must undergo the same discipline of the soul and learn to live according to the Will of the Lord and accept His Will sweetly, without grumbling or murmur. This is the supreme lesson which a man has to learn and it is the only way to perfect peace and happiness for men. Guru Nanak is positive about this and he states it in a direct, categorical fashion:—

“How to find Him? How then to get rid of the pall?

One way there is to make His Will our own. No other way, naught else.”

The Sikh Gurus teach man to so discipline himself as to make the divine Will his own, or to become in tune with the Infinite. The process is long and difficult and there are many stages on the way. The first stage is reached through prayer for Divine Favour (*Guru-prasāda*). The Gurus believe that nothing could be achieved by man without Divine Favour. It is for this reason that the Gurus attach great importance to prayer. Says Guru Nanak:—

“Nanak, with the Lord it is prayer alone that succeeds and not demands or commands.”

Man must not approach God in a spirit of vaingloriousness or even of confidence born of personal merits and achievements,

and depending on his good deeds alone claim, as a sort of *quid pro quo*, or right, His Favour in return. He should rather approach God in a chastened mood, in a spirit of true humility, with merit behind him but not standing on it, and throwing himself on His Mercy, forgetting that he has anything to offer, beg for Divine Favour. After all what can a man offer to Him who is the Giver of all he has? He can only beg for His Kindness and Favour. Says the first Guru:—

“What other merit have I—except that I have been found pleasing to Thee, O Lord?”

Without self-surrender, the Sikh Gurus are quite sure that man cannot win Divine Favour and Love.

In the *Japji* the first Guru of the Sikhs has described with masterly brevity the stages through which the human soul must pass in order to reach the final resting place. There are altogether five stages or *Khandas*. The first is called *Dharam Khand* or the Realm of Duty or Action. “The spirit of judgment rules over the Realm of Action,” says the Guru, and just as the earth is doing its duty in the universe amidst wind, water, fire, nether regions, etc., so the ideal for those who live on earth is that of Duty and every one shall be judged according to his actions:—

“As we do so shall we be judged.

The Court of God separates chaff from wheat,

Where shall be measured unto us our raw and ripe.

Each man shall stand alone;

His own deeds shall avail after the life of the earth.”

The next stage is described as *Gian Khand*, where “the spirit of Divine Knowledge reigns.” At this stage man is reinforced in his resolve to do his duty by the knowledge that it is only by doing their duty—*Dharma*—that the great ones of the world have reached the goal.

“There have been several Rāmas, Kṛishṇas and Rasuls:
They did not gain *prāpti* without *bhakti*.”

From the *Gian Khand* the soul transcends to *Sharam Khand*, the region where *Dharma* does not remain a mere matter of duty or knowledge but becomes natural and spontaneous, as if it had become a part of one's nature. It becomes ingrained as a permanent habit—automatic. This is described as the Realm of Ecstasy:—

“ There is holy rapture, here is naught else but Beauty.”

From this stage of rapture, the soul rises to the Region of Power—*Karam Khand*:—

“ The God of Power rules over this Realm,

Great masters who lift man by force as he toils through
the three other realms of Duty, Knowledge and Ecstasy.”

At this stage man acquires power—strength that comes from the character built in the preceding three stages. He becomes a mighty hero: no one can kill or trifle with him. He becomes like Rāma and Sītā invincible. His beauty becomes indescribable. The fear of death disappears and the wheel of births and deaths ceases to bother him.

“ Here are congregations of saints in bliss.

Whose minds and hearts are inebriate with God.”

From this realm of power the distance is not long to the final stage—*Such Khand*—the Abode of Truth—where “ reigns the Formless One.” In *Such Khand* the man has raised himself to the level of God and he becomes one with Him. The union with God ends the sojourn of the soul and it finds its permanent resting place at the feet of the Lord.

Such is the discipline, outlined by the Gurus, which the human soul must undergo in order to become part and parcel of the Supreme Soul and thus end its long and arduous journey through lakhs and lakhs of births. The Gurus regard human existence as a priceless opportunity for the development and perfection of the soul, which can only come through Divine Love and devotion.

“ Saith Nanak, devotion to God is the essence of all teachings,

Without *bhakti* all search is vain and fruitless.”

So whatever wise you may do or not, do pray to God for Divine Favour, for the gift of Divine Love for teaching you to live according to His Will and to attain perfect peace and happiness.

UNIVERSAL RELIGION

SHRI PUNDIT SUKHDEVJI, *Vidyāvāchaspati*

Arya Samaj, Calcutta

There is a hunger in every creature—both physical and spiritual. The animal is contented with merely satisfying his physical hunger, but the aim of man should be to satisfy both kinds of hunger, for he cannot do without it. We appease our physical hunger by external means, but we have to adopt a different process to satisfy our internal hunger. The name of that process is religion. In this scientific age religion is rejected in favour of science. The fact that science can satisfy only our external needs and that it is inadequate for the purpose of internal needs is forgotten. God has created our senses externally as a result of our actions (*Katha Up.*, iv.1). He is not to be blamed for that. It is the result of sinful actions. Therefore, it is desirable that we should turn our senses or desires inward. But if we follow science, instead of turning within we shall be turning more without. The great souls of Europe also had attained true peace from within and not from without. The first translation of the Upanishads into Latin in the year 1785 created a stir in Europe. After going through it, Schopenhauer said: "*It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death.*" Was this true peace gained from any scientific age? No, never.

This scientific age is a curse to the giant brains of the West. Being puzzled by its influence they want to get back to Nature, because they think that natural life will satisfy their internal needs and that they will gain true peace from it. Adolf Just, the learned German, has written a book entitled, *Return to Nature*. In this he has proved beyond doubt that it is possible for man to satisfy

his spiritual hunger by living a simple and religious life. Although London is a big city and one can have a direct view of the scientific discoveries as soon as one enters it, it was once written about it by the Bishop of Zanzibar, "*London is a glorious city but is terribly in the hands of Satan.*"

If you go through the works of Bacon, Cost, Goethe and other learned men, you will find them declaring that to obtain the internal hidden peace you must lead a natural and religious life. True peace will be yours from within your own self. We, the followers of the Vedic religion chant the hymn from *Īśvariya jñāna Veda* (the knowledge revealed by God), when engaged in our daily worship—"Soma, the peace-incarnate, appearing in the heart of all, protects us in our helplessness" (*Atharva*, iii. 27. 4). The name of this process through which we achieve this soul-force or by which we satisfy our spiritual hunger, is religion. That religion should therefore be a Universal religion.

We, the followers of the Vedic religion, believe that the Vedas are the fountain-head of that Universal religion. The original Vedas are four in number. They are the *Ṛig-Veda*, *Yajur-Veda*, *Sāma-Veda* and the *Atharva-Veda*. These Vedas contain the knowledge of God. They were revealed in the holy souls of the Ṛishis Agni, Vāyu, Āditya and Angiras respectively hand in hand with the creation of man. The different titles are kept according to the subjects mainly dealt with in each of them, namely knowledge (*jñāna*), action (*karma*), devotion (*upāsana*) and science (*viñāna*). The following *mantra* of the Vedas themselves bears testimony to the fact that they are the revealed knowledge of God: "He by whom the *Ṛig-Veda* as well as the *Yajur-Veda* was created, on Whose body the *Sāma-Veda* is like hair (i.e. just as hairs grow naturally and are distributed all over the body of a man, in the same manner, peace, love and devotion cover God and come to Him naturally), Whose mouth is *Atharva* Angiras, He is the support of everyone and He is joyful. Thou sayest so" (*Atharva*, x. 7. 20). There are similar hymns in other Vedas as well, e.g., *Ṛig-Veda*, x. 90. 9; *Yajur-Veda*, xxxi. 7; *Atharva-Veda*, xi. 7. 24. These hymns lead us to the conclusion that the Vedas have been brought into being by God Himself. The Ṛishis

preached the religion of the Vedas. They were called Rishis because they were the seers of the Vedas. When the Vedas began to be preached, they were written down. They are available now in the shape of books.

The learned men are unanimously agreed on the point that the Vedas are the only religious books which are older than the oldest book which can be found in any library in the world. The religion based on the oldest religious book must necessarily be the oldest. That old religion is our religion of the Vedas, and this the Maharshi Dayananda accepted and preached everywhere.

The Vedas are very old, so old that there is nothing older to dispute its antiquity, and the religion, based on them, which is also the most ancient is, according to the hymns of the Vedas themselves, given or revealed by God. That religion, indeed, can be a Universal religion. The name of that religion is "Arya Religion" or the "Vedic Religion." The cardinal principles taught in all the great religions of the world are traceable to the Vedas, and the great savant Prof. Max Müller therefore rightly says, "The Vedic religion was the only one, the development of which took place without any extraneous influences. . . . Even in the religion of the Hebrews, Babylonian, Phoenician and at a later time Persian influences have been discovered" (*India: What Can It Teach Us?*—P. 129).

Our Sāstras say, "*Satyam jñānamantaṁ Brahma.*" First they teach, "*Satyam*,"—that Truth is supreme. Every action in this world is dependent on It. Go wherever you like, you will find everybody upholding his action under the shelter of this Truth. Nay, a fraudulent merchant will ever talk of his trade as such and although speaking a falsehood will support himself in the name of truth. The falsehood of a liar is also dependent on truth. There is truth most supreme. Secondly the Sāstras say that everyone must gird up his loins to attain *Jñānam* (Knowledge), to seek and to know that Truth. The whole world is madly in search of truth. The businessman is trying to find out the truth—the reality; the scientist wants to find out the truth of the physical world with the help of science; the religious man seeks to find out the real truth which, as a matter of fact, is only one, not many.

The religion, which will continue to seek that one truth, no matter what method it follows, according to that truth, can, indeed, be a Universal Religion. Thirdly, the Sāstras say that the knowledge of truth is *anantam* or endless. When everyone will believe in the endlessness of the knowledge of truth, then there will be no occasion for anybody to be indolent and doubtful. The Veda says—"O Men, you, who are on the side of the truth, whose lives and aims are for the protection of truth, who are engaged in the establishment, furtherance and protection of truth, who by putting on a terrible appearance hate falsehood and try very hard for its destruction (that is, who are on the side of the truth against all chances and in all conditions and are even ready to give up your lives for its sake and are the haters of falsehood), O Men, let us all be under your happy protection and let the learned people also live under your shelter" (*Rig-Veda*, vii. 66. 13).

In the *Govil Grihya Sūtra* we have, "I go from falsehood to truth," "There is no greater religion than truth and there is no greater sin than falsehood." These sayings clearly point out that the love of truth is a necessity in a Universal Religion. What is that truth in religion? As a matter of fact there is truth in Unity and falsehood reigns where there is diversity. Truth must always be one. Maharshi Dayananda, the restorer of the Vedic religion and founder of the Arya Samaj writes in the *Light of Truth* thus—

- (1) The world may be fully benefited if instead of taking sides, people would treat one another with love and accept the results arrived at by all religions, that is, the factors which are in accordance with and true in all, leaving the differences out (Preface).
- (2) May the Almighty Soul endow the souls of human beings with the power of unifying their opinions (Sub-preface).
- (3) Truths which are accepted by all are common to all. Difference in opinion arises on false notions (Sub-preface 3).

From these sentences it is perfectly evident that truth is one

and differences are in the kingdom of falsehood. The Vedic religion aims at preaching that "truth" which is only one. The Vedic religion can be a "Universal religion" if it preaches that one truth alone.

All great men, namely, the Buddha, the Christ, Mohammed, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Guru Govind Singh, Jin Mahaprabhu, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Swami Dayananda tried to preach this one and only Truth.

The Arya Samaj is not like many sects. Our religion is not related to any particular person. In our religion no gulf separates us men from the Supreme Being. We do not require any intermediary to lead us to the Supreme Being. Whether there be any belief in someone or not, we know this for certain that the direct faith in the Supreme Being is capable of relieving us from our miseries. In our religion a direct relation between us and the Supreme Being is possible and a man can purify his life by worshipping his Lord. Every man is responsible for his own actions pious or sinful, and is answerable for them. No one is answerable for anybody else's actions. Everybody shall have to suffer the consequences of his own actions.

The Veda says—"O Most Acceptable Lord, let us be yours, O Friend of all, let us be yours with other relatives and learned men, so that through your blessing we may gain the desired wealth of knowledge and the bliss of liberation from all bondage" (*Rig-Veda*, vii. 66. 93). Thus does the Veda indicate the direct relation between man and the Supreme Being. Such a religion only can be a Universal religion which preaches the direct worship of the Supreme Being instead of that of a particular person. Some philosophers may not think in terms of God, but they do believe in some superior power on which all their religious notions are based. No religion can rest content without this belief in the infinite power. Therefore, Count Tolstoy writes in *What is Religion*—"Every religion regards men as equally insignificant compared to infinity."

That Supreme Being Who is the source of all religions, is One. The Vedas abound in hymns mentioning the Oneness and

indivisibility of the Supreme Being. The following are a few examples out of them:—

- (1) " That only One Supreme Being created the earth and the heaven " (*Rig-Veda*, x. 8. 3).
- (2) " That One Who is the Lord of all the wealth and men dwelling upon the earth and is most adorable " (*Rig-Veda*, i. 7. 9).
- (3) " That Supreme Being is called neither the second nor the third, nor the fourth, nor the fifth, nor the sixth, nor the seventh, nor the eighth nor the ninth, nor the tenth. He, who believes this Supreme Being to be One, can possess Him " (*Atharva*, xiii. 4. 16-18).

All these indicate the Unity of the Supreme Being.

Some thinkers are of opinion that in the beginning of creation human beings led a wild life like the animals and that they supported themselves in the forests like the savage beasts. They feared the ravages of such phenomena as the rain, the fire, the violent wind and the sky and thinking that these deities had become angry, they used to make offerings to them of the same flesh that they took to appease their anger. Thus came into existence the worship of many gods and the religion originated in fear. But when we study the Vedas, the God-given original religion, the above view is proved to be thoroughly baseless. In the Vedas the names Agni, Vāyu, Varuṇa, etc. are all synonymous with the Supreme Being, the difference in their use arising only in regard to the quality and relation, just as the same man is called the father, the brother and the son by different persons according as they stand related with him. The well-known Bishop Colinvaux had originally this idea that the Vedic literature supports Polytheism. He devoted his life to the research of the Vedas, He was charmed when he saw the hymn in the Veda, in which it has been said that the same *Sat* or Truth is called by the names Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Agni, Divya, Suparṇa, Yama and Mātariśvan (*Rig-Veda*, i. 164. 46).

In the same way, in a hymn of the *Yajur-Veda*, the One Supreme Being has been called by the names Agni, Āditya, etc.

(*Yajur-Veda*, 32. 1). As a result, that religion, which believes in the One Supreme Being Who is the source of all religions and preaches the Truth which is One, can necessarily become a Universal Religion.

Our Universal Religion teaches us to be friends with the world because our Lord, who is the source of our religion is a *Sarvamitra* (Friend of all).

In a hymn of the *Yajur-Veda* (36. 18) the devotee prays to God to enable him to look upon all created beings as friends. It is written in the Vedas that we should treat not only men but every being as a friend. There is brotherhood and fellowship with all created beings. It is not confined only to humanity. The feeling of friendship is placed above brotherhood. Brothers may differ for rights, but a friend gives up his claim in favour of a friend. True love abides in true friends. Only through such friendly intercourse can the world gain true peace, and the antagonism of religions be wiped out.

To sum up, that religion which possesses the qualities delineated above can be a Universal Religion. It is a good sign of the times that all the faiths of the world are attempting through this august Parliament to find out the truth and essence of all religions. It will serve its purpose if it can induce all the people of the world to be friends with one another and wipe out antagonism from their minds, for all are sons of the same immortal Father (*Sarve amritasya putrāḥ*).

THE BUDDHIST WAY OF LIFE

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I have chosen "The Buddhist Way of Life" as the subject of my paper for the simple reason that if Buddhism is to be correctly and rightly understood, it should be approached as a way of life and not a dogma which it has persistently refused to become throughout its long career of two thousand and five hundred

years. Many an attempt had been made in the past to read into it ideas which went directly against the spirit of its main teachings, but no such attempt has proved successful in doing so. This is why even after the lapse of so many centuries its message is as fresh, true and acceptable today as it was two thousand and five hundred years ago.

Religions can be classified broadly under two heads, the first consisting of those which are based on revelation, that is to say, those which take their stand on the authority of a saint who claims to be a prophet sent from Heaven with a particular message. The second division consists of those which base their teachings neither on revelation nor on the authority of any personage but on the fundamental facts of life and experience. They are not religions in the strict meaning of the word, but are schemes of life which would lead their adherents to spiritual happiness for which all religions are striving.

Buddhism must assuredly belong to the latter division as it is the religion of experiment and experience *par excellence*. Nowhere in the scriptures of the Buddhists does Buddha make any claim to revelation or to any authority derived from any outside agency. Nor have his followers attempted to fortify his teachings in the easy but most unstable foundation of divine authority. The danger of such a claim is too obvious to need explanation. Such an authority can be claimed by anyone believing in any kind of dogma and who can dare question the validity of the claim of any one particular claimant? One thing is however certain. Such claims have led to so much intolerance that the history of religion is indeed very painful to read.

From the very commencement of Lord Buddha's mission which lasted for forty-five years, he made it his special endeavour to make his hearers realize that he was a human being who had, with his own efforts, after years of inquiry and experiment, realized the Truth. He was therefore called *Buddha*, or 'the Enlightened One.' He examined the world as he found it, and tackled its problems at their very source. The hard facts of life were thoroughly investigated and on their sure foundation was built the way of life which has now come to be known as the

"Buddhist way." It is because of this that neither science nor any of the modern movements which have shaken the fond beliefs of many a religion, has been able to touch Buddhism at all. In fact, new discoveries of science and ideas promulgated by the most enlightened minds of the day go to further strengthen the Buddhistic point of view.

Before an acceptable "way of life" is formulated which would become part and parcel of one's life, and not remain as an ideal in sacred books, its basic truths must be laid down clearly and unambiguously for our understanding. Nowhere have these fundamentals been enunciated so plainly and beautifully as they have been done in Buddhism. Here there is not the least chance for misunderstanding or misinterpretation. What are these fundamentals? They are the four noble truths enunciated by Buddha, viz. *Duḥkha* or the existence of suffering or disharmony, *Duḥkhasamudaya*, the origin of suffering which is nothing but *tanhā* or craving, *Duḥkhanirodha* or the removal of this suffering, and fourth the *Duḥkhanirodhamāgga* or the way to the removal of this suffering. The last of these truths is, therefore, the Buddhist way of life.

"One thing only I teach: suffering and the destruction of suffering," said Buddha. "Now this is the Noble Truth of suffering, birth is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, sorrow, grief, pain, lamentations are suffering, union with unpleasant things is suffering, separation from the beloved objects is suffering, unsatisfied desires are suffering; in short, the five groups of clinging are suffering." This statement of Buddha concerning the most obvious fact of life is so true and undeniable that it requires hardly any commentary. And yet it is the proper understanding of this most significant fact of life that would enable us to seek a way out of suffering. If there were no suffering or disharmony and if all were well with the world, there would be no reason for us to follow any religion whatsoever. We would be most happy as materialists and would have probably followed Chārvāka. But we know there is suffering as a fact. This is a rock against which everyone of us, whether great or small, rich or poor, high or low, has to strike his head one day and hence

the supreme necessity of the realization of this Truth. Take for instance one single example. One of the greatest problems of this world is hunger which has so far baffled solution by even the mightiest of Governments, and there is no suffering which is keener than this which Lord Buddha has declared as " the greatest of diseases." It is for the satisfaction of the elementary needs of the body that men, women and even children rush up and down the streets of all modern cities today. Were it possible for one to detach oneself from the crowd and watch from a corner this continuous bustle of life, one would be amazed at the life and death struggle going on in their midst. One would think that the whole world had gone mad. But what do these men, women and children who rush about all day and night seek after? What is the motive behind this tremendous expenditure of time and energy of practically the whole of the human race? It is nothing but the simple desire to secure the bare necessities of life which, owing to some fault of our own or in the constitution of the world, cannot be obtained without the sacrifice of most of our time and energy. And the tragic part of the whole business is that even if some manage to obtain the requirements of the body, they are not satisfied and still work as feverishly as ever. After they had satisfied their ordinary requirements, we should reasonably expect them to stop, allowing others to come up to their level. But this is not done. They would strain every nerve to acquire more and yet more riches for their gratification, and hence arises the restlessness that we find in the world today. Wars, rivalries and hatreds that we witness throughout ages can be ascribed to this desire for self-gratification.

Now what is the cause of this deadly struggle among human beings? The cause is to be found stated in the little Pāli word *tanhā*, or *trishṇā* in Sanskrit, meaning " craving " or " desire " or " greed " which is within us all. This *tanhā* or " craving " is at the bottom of all the troubles of this world, and has brought untold miseries on countless millions of beings. It is this all-powerful germ which finds room in our hearts that begets all other evils. It is the root cause of avarice, anger, hatred, malice, rivalry, jealousy, envy, hypocrisy, deceit, pride, arrogance and

ignorance and has ruined individuals and nations. We can therefore see that the cause of our suffering is within us, and at the same time it is in our power to remove this cause and attain to happiness. In our selfishness and ignorance we may not admit this, or we may deliberately shut our eyes to this concrete fact, because it is inconvenient to think of it. But the truth of this great discovery of Buddha will not be thereby disproved. Let each one of us sincerely and honestly search his heart and try to look for the cause of his individual unhappiness, and I am sure everyone will come to the one and only conclusion, viz. that it is due to *tanhā* or craving for this thing and that thing which is present in our hearts. No amount of prayer will remove it. No beliefs in any doctrine will eradicate it. No outward agency can remove it. It must be removed by our own selves by self-understanding and self-purification.

It is for this self-purification that Buddha laid down his way of life which is known as the Noble Eightfold Path. It is not impossible to achieve this self-purification, though it may sound almost impossible. Buddhists do not believe that human beings are born sinners. Buddha proclaimed that we have within us the capacity to overcome this all-devouring *tanhā*, if we train ourselves in a particular way. If there is no end to this selfishness there is no end to suffering of humanity. Buddhism is, therefore, the most optimistic of religions. It holds up before the eyes of the world the prospect of a better and nobler existence not after death but here on this earth, in which there will be no strife, no greed, no cause of suffering. Whether we achieve it or not will depend entirely upon ourselves.

Our ideas of life, property, morality and even of religion are acquired from those around us and we are, therefore, the victims of the passions, likes and dislikes of those who have preceded us. If we can liberate ourselves from this slavery of established dogmas, we would see things from a different angle. We would see truth face to face.

The Buddhist way of life is, therefore, a training which we have to undergo for the attainment of this high ideal. The eight steps of the Path are right views, right aspirations, right speech,

right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

Now *Right Views* are certainly necessary before we can succeed in any endeavour. We have to guard against the error of starting with wrong views, as in that case nothing that follows can come right. If the foundation is well laid, the superstructure becomes strong and stable, but if we have a shaky and false foundation, disaster would soon follow. In order to acquire right views one has to be unbiassed with regard to all ideas and facts of life. For instance, if in greed a man were to think that it would be advantageous to rob his neighbour and enrich himself, he would not be following the right view. He should rather consider that his neighbour's happiness is as important to him as his own, and therefore he should respect his feelings. Lack of right views on religious, social and political affairs has been the cause of much misunderstanding and suffering throughout history. If the Buddhist doctrine of right views had been known and practised, much of this suffering could have been avoided. Pages of history are full of instances of religious persecutions, because there was a lack of right views concerning the attitude one should adopt in meeting opposition. To many dogmatists the only way to deal with any difference of opinion is to use the sword, but Buddhism has taught that the right views consist in exposing error by the spread of knowledge. This is why there has been not a single instance of religious persecution among the Buddhists.

Right Aspiration consists in keeping one's goal before one's eyes and not deviating from the *Right Path*. We must be clear as to what we are aiming at. If we want to go to Bombay, there is no good taking a train to Madras. We would only go where we do not want. To a Buddhist right aspiration therefore consists in trying to attain that high state of perfection where there will be an end of strife and suffering. It is a thing to be reached on this earth, in perfect consciousness.

Right Speech consists in telling the truth and avoiding slander, harsh speech and foolish babble. Wrong speech has brought about greater unhappiness in this world than anything else. Individual lying is more or less admitted by all as wrong, but

collective lying by nations and communities is still regarded as beyond reproach. We know how many nations had resorted to campaigns of lies against their enemies in order to rouse the passions of their own countrymen. During the last Great War, there was a regular campaign, and the same thing is being repeated today when feverish preparations are being made to commence another massacre. Armament manufacturers are said to be spending hundreds of thousands of pounds in playing one nation against another with lying propaganda, so that they may increase their respective armaments. They can think only in terms of their own profit and not in terms of the suffering that would result in case of a great war. We can, therefore, realize how important it is for us to cultivate *Right Speech*.

Right Action consists in refraining from killing, stealing, adultery and drinking strong liquor. Killing for sport is even worse than for other purposes, as it demonstrates a very low mental quality which can find pleasure in destroying innocent lives. One of the first things that Emperor Aśoka did when he embraced Buddhism was to stop royal hunting expeditions. There are many innocent sports in which those who desire pleasure could take part instead of hunting which is nothing but a remnant of the cave-man's savage habits. Right action also consists in doing acts of positive good such as helping the poor, attending to the sick, and other acts of kindness in general.

Right Livelihood consists in earning one's living by fair means and not resorting to base methods. There are certain kinds of trade which a Buddhist is expected to refrain from. They are those which cause suffering to others such as slaughter of animals, hunting, selling intoxicating articles, and dealing in slaves and deadly weapons, etc. Thus Buddhism by insisting on right living strikes at the very root of many of the world's evils. If these five wrong forms of livelihood are done away with, the world would be a happier place to live in than it is today. Many centuries before Abraham Lincoln abolished slavery, Lord Buddha had prohibited it in India.

Right Endeavour consists in not allowing bad thoughts to arise in the mind, expelling those which have already arisen, and

awakening good thoughts and desires which have not yet arisen, and further strengthening those which have already arisen. Lord Buddha has laid much emphasis on controlling the mind as it is the mind which originates and directs. If the mind is controlled and made pure, actions too would become pure.

“ All states arising have mind for the causing,
Mind for their master, of mind are the offspring.
He who with foul mind speaks or does action,—
Him pain pursues as the wheel dogs the ox-hoof.”—

is the opening verse of the *Dhammapada*.

Right Mindfulness is to develop the quality of awareness. In other words one has to keep one's eyes open so that one may receive the correct impressions and profit by them and avoid those which are harmful. Whatever we do, whether we walk, sit or talk, we have to be conscious of the act we are engaged in so that we may not get into trouble. The follies of forgetfulness are too well known to need any explanation. There are various methods taught in Buddhism to develop this mindfulness, but I have no time to go into details.

The last step in the Eightfold Path is *Right Concentration* or meditation. This step is absolutely necessary for the realization of *Nirvāṇa*. It is a form of mind-culture which helps one to develop the latent spiritual forces in order to attain full knowledge. In other words, it is the highest stage of development in the Buddhist way of life through which one comprehends the peace of *Nirvāṇa*.

These are the eight steps in the Buddhist way of Life which lead to the ending of suffering, or the emancipation of *Nirvāṇa*. When greed, anger, hatred, ignorance and other evils have been entirely removed from the heart, there will then arise that spark called *Bodhi*, or Enlightenment which would bring us serenity, peace, contentment and perfect happiness.

Now one may reasonably ask the question, what is “right.” It is, indeed, a very difficult question. No one with a limited knowledge can give an adequate answer to this question. This is why there are so many religions and so many different creeds

existing in the world today. Hence the necessity of perfect toleration for the views of one another. The Buddhists have an excellent standard by which to judge what is right and what is wrong. As the removal of suffering is the main purpose of the Buddhist way of Life, every thought, word or action that would go to increase this suffering would be wrong and every thought, word or action which would help in removing it would be right. This, I think, would serve as a reliable and sufficient guide to the question of right and wrong. Lord Buddha refused to go into metaphysics and cloud the immediate issue before us. Is there God or no God? Is life eternal or not eternal? These questions were set aside as not requiring an answer for the attainment of *Nirvāṇa*. The immediate great problem for Buddha was suffering and the destruction of suffering. Whatever did not contribute towards this goal, he laid aside and asked his followers not to bother about it. When he was interrogated about these matters he explained his position in a parable. He said, "If a man should be hit by a poisonous arrow and he should tell the physician who wants to extract it, 'I shall not allow you to extract the arrow before I know to which caste the man who shot it belongs, what his name is, whether he is tall or short, stout or thin, where he lives, of what material the point of the arrow is made, of what material the string of the bow,' that man would die before he had an answer to all these questions. In a like manner a person would die who would study all these philosophical and metaphysical questions but would not follow the path. The solving of these and similar question does not lead to calmness, to real knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nirvāṇa*."

Buddha did not even ask his followers to accept what he said as the truth. He asked everyone of his followers to realize the truth for himself by his own understanding. Buddhas merely point out the way. This is what he said to the Kalamas: "Do not believe anything on mere hearsay. Do not believe traditions because they are old, and have been handed down through many generations. Do not believe anything on account of rumours, or because people talk a great deal about it. Do not believe simply because the written testimony of some ancient sage is shown to

be there. Never believe anything because presumption is in its favour, or because the custom of many years inclines thee to take it as true. Do not believe anything on the mere authority of thy teachers or priests—whatsoever according to thine own experience, and after thorough investigation, agrees with thy reason, and is conducive to thine own weal and welfare as well as to those of other living beings, *that* accept as true and shape thy life in accordance therewith."

This is a statement which has no parallel and it shows Buddha's firm conviction that what he had discovered was true and incontrovertible. No doctrine which cannot stand the test of examination and reasoning has any value and it should be rejected. This freedom to accept what is true and beneficial and to reject what is false, is one of the greatest gifts of Buddha to the world. This is the Magna Carta of human freedom. Long before scientific approach to problems became an accepted method of study in the West, Lord Buddha had applied it in India. He brought new light and rescued mankind from the thralldom of priestly authority, superstition and blind belief. The modern world has recognized these as evils and the younger generation is slowly but surely giving them up. In Buddhism they will find a religion which is free from any kind of such superstition, priestly authority and unacceptable dogma. T. W. Ryhs Davids, the famous orientalist, wrote once as follows:—"Never in the history of the world had a scheme of salvation been put forth so simple in its nature, so free from any superhuman agency, so independent of, so even antagonistic to the belief in soul, and the belief in God. Whether these be right or wrong, it was a turning point in the religious history of man when a reformer full of the most earnest moral purpose, and trained in all the intellectual culture of his time, put forth deliberately, and with a knowledge of the opposing views, doctrine of salvation to be found here, in this life, in an inward change of heart, to be brought about by perseverance in a mere system of self-culture and of self-control."

A religion or a way of life is judged not merely by the truths it proclaims but also by the change that it brings about in the life of its followers. So far as this test is concerned, Buddhism has

a record in achievement of which we can take a genuine pride. Wherever Buddhism had spread and wherever its benign influence had penetrated, it always ennobled the lives of the people, it has brought happiness and enlightenment. It has stimulated all those qualities which help men to lead better and fuller lives. Art, architecture, medicine, science and philosophy received the greatest impetus from the hands of the Buddhists. This has been the case in all countries where Buddhism spread whether it was India, or Burma, Ceylon or Siam, Japan or China, Tibet or Mongolia, Cambodia or Korea. A Buddhist Temple is not merely a place of worship, but also a centre of education and enlightenment. To the Buddhists, ignorance is a curse which has to be removed and every effort made in that direction is encouraged. Amelioration of the suffering of human beings as well as animals is one of its main works, and hospitals and asylums were established by Buddhists even in very ancient times. It was the great Emperor Aśoka who lived two hundred and fifty years before the birth of Christ, who established hospitals for both men and animals when that idea was foreign to Western countries.

Religious persecution is unknown to Buddhism, and it is the proud claim of the Buddhists that not a single drop of blood has ever been shed in the name of Buddhism, though it has spread throughout Asia and still claims the largest number of votaries. What a tremendous change was brought about in the morality of the people of India when Buddhism was a living force, can be gathered from the fine accounts of India left by foreign travellers. The influence of Buddhism on the lives of rulers is exemplified in the life of Emperor Aśoka whom H. G. Wells considers one of the six greatest men in history. The famous inscriptions which he has left on stone pillars scattered all over India bear testimony to his noble character. Here are a couple of passages from those inscriptions:—"Everywhere in my dominions as well as among my neighbours I made arrangement for medical treatment for men and for beasts. Medicinal herbs also, wholesome for men and beasts, wherever they were lacking, have been imported and planted. On the roads wells have been dug, trees planted, and rest-houses erected for the enjoyment of man and beasts. Now

by me this arrangement has been made that at all hours and in all places, whether I am dining or in the ladies' apartment, in my bed-room or in my carriage, or in the palace garden, the official reporters should report to me on the people's business and I am ready to do the people's business in all places. Because I never feel full satisfaction in my efforts and dispatch of business. For the welfare of all folks is what I must work for, and the root of this, again, is in effort and the dispatch of business. And whatever exertions I make are made to the end that I may discharge my debt to animate beings, that they may all become happy."

Aśoka was also the only Emperor in history who, after a smashing victory over an adversary and when he could easily expand his empire by conquests, deliberately abandoned warfare as an instrument of national policy and gave peace and security to all his neighbouring kingdoms. Instead of conquering them by force, he sent messengers of Truth to teach morality, kindness and goodwill. It was the Buddhist way of living which was able to bring about this wonderful change in the life of this Emperor. He not only practised the virtue of *ahimsā* or non-violence but practised the positive Buddhist virtue of *maitrī* or compassion towards all living beings.

Then again Lord Buddha was the first to raise his voice of protest against the iniquity of caste and untouchability in India. "One does not become a Brahmin by birth but by action," was his teaching which brought about a unity among the diverse races and castes of India undreamt of before. Mere profession of the unity of the fundamentals of religion will be of no avail, if in our daily lives we create barriers between man and man and consider some to be touchable and others untouchable. It will be a mockery of religion. If religion is to have any meaning, it must be a way of life. Its practice does not mean the visiting of temples or the worshipping of idols, but conducting our everyday activities in conformity with the highest principles of religion. If our dealings with our fellow beings are dishonest, treacherous, arrogant, cruel and unsympathetic, then all our prayers or worship in temples or the repetition of sacred words will not carry us one inch nearer to the goal of spiritual happiness.

It is in our dealings with our fellow beings, in the small acts of kindness or cruelty that we reflect the degree of our spiritual growth. The Buddhist way of life, therefore, consists in first attempting to perfect these little acts of life, and then aiming at higher states of realization, so that by degrees we would grow from imperfection to perfection. It is the dynamic view of spiritual life—*bhava* or becoming or growing from the small to the greater till the highest ideal of *Nirvāṇa* is attained. This growth does not depend on any outside agency. It must come from within and that is why so much stress is laid in the Buddha's way of life on self-control and self-realization.

The last words of the Buddha which he uttered before he entered *Mahāparinirvāṇa* at Kuśinara should be treasured up in memory by all of us who seek for spiritual happiness:

*Attadīpā viharatha atthasaraṇā anaññā saraṇā
Vayadhammā saṅkhārā appamādena sampādetha*

“Be a light unto yourself, be a refuge unto yourself, there is no external refuge. All component things are impermanent. Work out your Salvation in earnestness.”

THEOSOPHY OR WISDOM-RELIGION

MADAME SOPHIA WADIA

Bombay

With a noble and august motive the Swamijis of the Ramakrishna Mission and other organizers of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary have convened this Parliament of Religions to which men and women from the four quarters of the globe have come. In our India such Parliaments are not exotic plants; they are natural to our soil, for, is not India the Garden of Religions? Here expert growers have attained supreme knowledge of their art and their labours of love have given us many healthful herbs to cure soul diseases and numerous sweet flowers to offer in soul worship. Generations of men and women have used the herbs

to return to soul sanity and spiritual health, and they have also inhaled the fragrance of the flowers to enlighten their hearts and bring repose to their minds. So all thanks to our hosts, and our salutations to their *guru* in whose memory they have called us here.

It is but meet and proper that the voice of Theosophy be heard in this Parliament. Theosophy is the fountain-head from which all great religions have sprung. But when we say that Theosophy is the common source, we do not mean that all that is in the various religions assembled together would represent Theosophy; a mistaken notion, to that effect, prevails. Theosophy is not an assemblage of doctrines culled from various creeds: Theosophy is the sacred womb of Wisdom Itself, from which in all ages and *yugas*, on every continent now lost or extant, Religion was born—Religion, not religions. Religions which differ one from the other are corrupted versions of one Eternal Religion, *Sanātana Dharma*. Wisdom-Religion, *Bodhi-Dharma* was, is and ever will be one and indivisible, and it antedates the Vedas themselves,

Theosophy, as the mother of all knowledge—religious, scientific, philosophic—knowledge verified and verifiable, is as old as thinking man. It teaches that man is not descended from the ape, but is a descendant of divine humanity. Our Teacher, H. P. Blavatsky, in her monumental work, the two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine*, not only traces the eventful story of ancient Āryāvarta, but going still further backwards unveils for us the age when the mind-born sons of Prajāpati, the great Brahmā, incarnated bodily on earth and taught the arts and sciences to early child-humanity. Theosophy is that Primeval Wisdom-Religion taught by the divine ancestors, the *mānasa-putras* of the *Purāṇas*. The early Teachers of humanity were the *Deva-Rishis*, the *Brahma-Rishis* and the *Rāja-Rishis* of Hindu-lore.

The direct return to that Primeval Wisdom is possible in this cycle when the first 5000 years of the Kali-Yuga are behind us. Our world has become international, and is on its way to becoming cosmopolitan: that internationalism is superficial and the real cosmopolitan spirit cannot be born of modern knowledge. A

unifying force is necessary and Wisdom alone can bring to birth a united world.

This Primeval Wisdom-Religion falls and always fell into two divisions, viz. the exoteric and the esoteric. Using Indian terminology, the exoteric is represented by *Shad-darsanas*, the six Schools, each of which offers but one point of view. The esoteric is the seventh point of view. The six Schools are like the six cardinal points of East, West, South, North, Zenith and Nadir; the seventh is the centre of the six-sided cube, and is known as *Brahma-Vidyā* or *Gupta-Vidyā*, the hidden or esoteric science. It is to that seventh view, the synthesized complete view that Theosophy calls us. But this seventh view is not only Aryan. In the past, distant and near, much of the Primeval Wisdom-Religion was taught in other lands—among the peoples who originally lived on the continent which now we call North, Central and South Americas; in Greece by Pythagoras and Plato; in Judea by Jesus the Anointed One; in Alexandria by God-instructed Ammonius Saccas. Hence, while it is true that Aryan India possesses in a very full measure this Primeval Theosophy, we must not overlook the Sufi mystics of Arabia, nor Iran the land of the Zarathushtras, and in more recent times such Europeans as Paracelsus, Jacob Boehme, Claude St. Martin, Comte de St. Germain, and others who lit their torches of Wisdom at the Fire kindled by Tsong-Kha-Pa in Tibet.

The modern presentation of Theosophy, exoteric and esoteric, is to be found in the recorded message of H. P. Blavatsky. That much maligned lion-hearted spiritual lady should not be judged by you on hearsay talk, on what others, friends and followers or enemies and strangers, think of her. Nor should her teaching be appraised by reading the many interpretations and commentaries made after her death by those claiming to be her students. Many are the false and fantastic notions that have circulated under the name of Theosophy, and at the outset a sincere seeker must distinguish between the Theosophy of Madame Blavatsky and the speculative theories of pseudo-Theosophy. If you want to judge of the teachings of Jesus, you must go to his Sermon on the Mount; you cannot expect to learn of his exalted code of ethics by listening

to the various preachers of the many Christian denominations, nor by examining the mode of life adopted by those who call themselves his followers. Similarly, if you wish to know the doctrines expounded by Śrī Kṛishṇa, it is useless to go to the numerous commentaries on the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. It is best and wisest to go directly to the *Gītā* itself. And likewise if you really wish to know what the teachings of Theosophy are, you must go to the original source, to the books written by the founder of the present Theosophical Movement, that is, to the books and writings of H. P. Blavatsky. "From the teaching to the teacher." It is only through a perusal of her own books that you can judge of Madame Blavatsky as a teacher. And what are her books? They are four in number. First comes *Isis Unveiled* in two volumes, which shows what is wrong in theology, in science and in spiritism, while it offers the explanations of abnormal psychical and psychological phenomena. Secondly, there is *The Secret Doctrine*, which is also in two volumes and which gives in constructive form the cosmogenesis and the anthropogenesis. Thirdly, we have *The Key to Theosophy* which answers all enquiries likely to occur to any of you, and in a simple form outlines the synthesis of science, philosophy and religion which Theosophy is. Last, but not the least, is *The Voice of the Silence*, a small book, smaller even than the *Gītā*, which is dedicated to the few, and which enables the aspirant to the Higher Life to begin his arduous labours. The Way to Theosophic Life is enshrined in it, and to an outline of it we must now turn.

The Way of Life, which through Yogic Development, leads to the Great Renunciation, is possible for all, provided its right principles are understood in theory first, and the early steps are taken with humility yet with ardent earnestness. The Way is long and the labour is arduous, and as is implied in the sixth chapter of the *Gītā*, death of body will intervene, but once the stream is entered and the gaze of the mind is fixed on the "Other Shore", success is bound to follow. What are the principles to be grasped by the mind? First, not to run away from the home to some *āśrama*, not to withdraw from the world to some mountain top.

If thou art told that to become Arhan thou hast to cease to love all beings—tell them they lie.

If thou art told that to gain liberation thou hast to hate thy mother and disregard thy son ; to disavow thy father and call him 'householder'; for man and beast all pity to renounce—tell them their tongue is false.

Believe thou not that sitting in dark forests, in proud seclusion and apart from men ; believe thou not that life on roots and plants, that thirst assuaged with snow from the great Range—believe thou not, O Devotee, that this will lead thee to the goal of final liberation.

Not to begin with mere outer change, with external practices, but with the inner. Inner conversion, change of heart and of mind, must precede any form of outer discipline. How many thousands die, spiritually speaking, in this our loved land of India, because they start with the outer ; control of the senses while the mind is wandering upon the objects of sense ; washing the body while the heart is unclean ; nibbling nuts and fruit while swallowing the flesh of anger, the meat of passion, the drink of greed! Such are the still-born souls. Infantile mortality is one of our social problems, but oh! think of the other infantile mortality in soul-life of thousands of so-called *sādhus* and *jakirs*. Well-intentioned and well-meaning many of them, but by what name does the *Gītā* call them? By "*vimūḍhātmā*," "false pietists of bewildered soul." Then what should be done? Listen:

The selfish devotee lives to no purpose. The man who does not go through his appointed work in life—has lived in vain.

Follow the wheel of life ; follow the wheel of duty to race and kin, to friend and foe, and close thy mind to pleasures as to pain. Exhaust the law of *karmic* retribution. Gain *siddhis* for thy future birth.

If sun thou canst not be, then be the humble planet. Aye, if thou art debarred from flaming like the noon-day sun upon the snow-capped mount of purity eternal, then choose, O neophyte, a humbler course.

Point out the "Way"—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.

"Point out the 'Way' "—but this stage has its own lure. The desire to serve and to help degenerates when it has not a firm spiritual basis. In the world of today the ideal of service is widely adopted—the desire to do, to do, is great, and that desire proves fatal for so many aspirants to soul-life who rush in trying to serve, forgetting that this most difficult of arts requires deep spiritual perception. We know many persons who come saying, "I want to serve humanity; I am ready to sacrifice everything"; but ask them, "What have you got to sacrifice?" They come to the Temple of the Lord empty-hearted, empty-headed, empty-handed! In our last quotation from *The Voice of the Silence* two injunctions are given: "Gain *siddhis* for thy future birth" and "Point out the 'Way' ". One without the other will not do. Some there are who only want to sit for *yogic* development; others rush out to help and to serve; both go astray. The would-be *yogi* develops *tamas* (inertia); the would-be server *rajas* (inordinate activity). What deludes them? Their own mental perception, narrow, coloured, superficial, and so the instruction:

The pupil must seek out the Rajah of the senses, the Thought-Producer, he who awakes illusion.

The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real.

Let the Disciple slay the Slayer.

The fight is not with the senses. The fight is in the mind. The Fighter, the Warrior within, the *kshatriya*, the Real Man, *Nara*, has to be found. Unless He is found, there can be neither soul-progress nor soul-service.

Within thy body—the shrine of thy sensations—seek in the Impersonal for the 'Eternal Man'; and having sought him out, look inward: thou art *buddha*.

To seek out the Eternal Man within—very difficult!

Many people want *gurus*, and there are as many who want to be *gurus*—Nature always adjusts the supply to the demand! But

why this craze for *gurus*? Because the virile dependence upon the *Purusha* within is absent. The spiritual life is not for the effeminate, the weak ; men worship Durgā, the Great Mother, because she rides the Lion, symbol of Majestic Law. " Save my soul, save my soul"—people cry to others. Our answer is: " Take the Kingdom of Heaven by violence." To rely on the Self, the God within, the Inner Ruler, is the beginning of real happiness and peace spiritual.

Of teachers there are many ; the Master-Soul is one, the Universal Soul. Live in that Master as Its ray in thee. thee. Live in thy fellows as they live in It.

We cannot speak, but only babble ; we cannot serve, but only temporize, unless the Spirit-Being in us has begun to whisper the message of *Sat*, Truth. Says our book :

Before the Soul can comprehend and may remember, she must unto the Silent Speaker be united, just as the form to which the clay is modelled is first united with the potter's mind.

Then it is that we really learn ; otherwise it is only mental recreation, not learning.

If thy Soul smiles while bathing in the Sunlight of thy Life ; if thy Soul sings within her chrysalis of flesh and matter ; if thy Soul weeps inside her castle of illusion ; if thy Soul struggles to break the silver thread that binds her to the Master ; know, O Disciple, thy Soul is of the earth.

And this earth—what is it?

This earth, Disciple, is the Hall of Sorrow, wherein are set along the Path of dire probations, traps to ensnare thy Ego by the delusion called " Great Heresy".

And what is that "Great Heresy"? The belief that we are separate from other souls, the delusion that we are separate from the One Universal, Infinite Self. We must destroy the sense of separateness, of thy soul and my soul. What binds and unifies the Swamijis together? The soul of their *guru*, Ramakrishna. What

will bind all men, all women, of whatever nation or creed, together? The Power, the *Śakti* of the Universal Soul. Within each one of us is the One Spirit—some call It Rāma, some call It Kṛishṇa, some call It Buddha, some call It Christ ; what matters the name? The important thing is to realize It. And when you have found It within your own heart, what will you do? Use your realization to purify and elevate the mind, to subdue and to destroy the passions, to control and to use the senses. In this book there are some wonderful things about the nature of *manas*, the human mind, its control and its purification, but unfortunately we have no time. When the body is becoming the nine-gated city of the Lord in which *kāma* and *krodha* have gone, in which the light of *buddhi* shines with unfading glory—what next? When full of Him you are nearing liberation—then what? Our book says that there are two paths and to choose one becomes our right and privilege. What are these two paths? Path the first is liberation ; Path the second in renunciation. The inner meaning of the profound expression *Adhi-yajña*, the Great Sacrifice, is not always understood. The Great Sacrifice is the renouncing of *moksha*, the giving up of liberation to don forever the miseries of the flesh for the helping of the world. Says our text:

Now bend thy head and listen well, O Bodhisattva,
Compassion speaks and saith: " Can there be bliss when all
that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the
whole world cry?"

How many among us desire to enter the peace of *mukti*, the bliss of *nirvāṇa*? At the beginning the aspirant wants to run away from the home, at the end the full-blown soul wants to run away from the sorrowful star. In Hindu mysticism liberation in and through *samādhi* is stressed, and the method of *Adhi-yajña*, the Great Sacrifice, is almost forgotten. What is the goal? It is this:

Self-doomed to live through future *kalpas*, unthanked and unperceived by men ; wedged as a stone with countless other stones which form the "Guardian Wall," such is thy future if the seventh Gate thou passest. Built by the hands

of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented, it shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow.

Why be afraid of misery? Why be afraid of sorrow? Why be afraid of poverty and disease? These should awaken Divine Compassion, and make us repeat the Vow of Kwan-Yin, the Chinese Mother of Mercy. What is that Vow?

Never will I seek nor receive private individual salvation. Never will I enter into final peace alone ; but forever and everywhere will I live and strive for the redemption of every creature throughout the world.

This makes man not God, but more than God. Such alone is the true *mahātman* for whom

All Nature thrills with joyous awe and feels subdued. The silver star now twinkles out the news to the night-blossoms, the streamlet to the pebbles ripples out the tale ; dark ocean waves will roar it to the rocks surf-bound, scented breezes sing it to the vales, and stately pines mysteriously whisper: " A Master has arisen, a *Master of the day*".

Such a Master, such a Sage, such a *Guru*, enables us to cross the ocean of *samsāra* ; He is to us more than Brahmā, more than Viṣṇu, more than Śiva, higher than Him there is naught. To such Blessed Ones, to such Great Rishis, our salutations.

WHAT IS CHINESE RELIGION ?

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When I first travelled in India, many Indian friends happened rather often to ask me a very common and yet very embarrassing question which made me hesitate to make a quick reply. The question is: " What Religion do you believe?" When young at school, I studied for the most part Chinese classics, histories

and other philosophical books by different authors ; when grown up, I had a glimpse of some important schools of thought and learning in the world, and had developed especially a taste for the classics of religions such as the Bible and the Koran. But what I liked most were the Buddhist Classics and Buddhist philosophy. It seems to me that of all the religious works and religious philosophies Buddhism is the richest and profoundest in quality as well as in quantity, so such so that the study of Buddhist philosophy has been my intellectual work for the last few years. But I cannot be called a Buddhist, for I have neither "given up my family" nor formally accepted the order of asceticism. Though I have observed more or less the fundamental ascetic rules of Buddhism such as the "Five Rules," yet I have not had the honour of "receiving orders" through any religious ceremony. At most, I may be called a zealous student of Buddhist philosophy or "a Buddhist scholar" as kindly addressed by my friends, but at any rate, I dare not assume the title of "a Buddhist." So in answering the former question, I felt the greatest difficulty; for neither did I know how to make the proper reply, nor might I be excused from giving the desired answer: But I could only say:

"I believe in Chinese Religion."

But here again, this kind of answer gave rise to another more difficult question, namely:

"What is Chinese Religion?"

"Chinese Religion" which is a new term suggested by myself is not only unknown to the foreigners but also never heard of even among our own Chinese people. When replying my *questionnaire*, in the name of that term, I myself felt to a certain extent the novelty of it, but that was the only proper answer and no other whatever that I could possibly give. So my second answer to the second question was still:

"Chinese Religion is Chinese Religion."

Such an answer might be justified logically, but the listener would certainly say "It is no answer at all," and remain discontented,

if not disappointed. And yet on my part, it was the only answer I could possibly make.

"What is Chinese Religion?" is, in fact, a very new, very important and also very interesting problem. Many scholars, Chinese as well as foreign, uphold in one voice that the religions of China have all come from outside, such as Buddhism from India, Zoroastrianism from Persia, Islam and Christianity from Arab, and that there is no indigenous Religion whatever born or produced originally within the country itself. The popular form of "Confucianism," they boldly assert, is no Religion in reality, for Confucius is a philosopher, moralist, statesman and educationist, but no religionist. They say that the thoughts and teachings of Confucius are ethical philosophy, political theory and educational principle, but not religious philosophy. With regard to Taoism, they also believe that it is non-religious, for Laotse is not, as popularly believed, the creator of Taoism. The prevalent name of Taoism actually began to appear with Chang-Tao-Ling sometime in the latter Han Dynasty in Chinese History, that is, about the Second Century in the Christian Era. The Taoistic art of "witchcrafts" and "magical writings" is absolutely different from the teachings of Laotse. In truth, Laotse is purely a philosopher but no religionist, while the contents of Taoism are really far from religion too. If these views were correct, then China having no indigenous Religion could naturally have no such thing as Chinese Religion. And again, there are many scholars who take it as a pleasure and honour that China is devoid of any Religion. They think that a Religion, as the very name suggests, cannot be free from the tint of superstition. It is illiberal internally and exclusive externally, not only imprisoning the free thoughts of the people but also arousing hatred and struggles inside and outside the various sects. As China has no Religion of her own creation, so the Chinese people can be quite free in cogitation and judgment and have neither the habit of bigotry nor the practice of exclusion. They have been able not only to suffer from no calamity of religious wars, but also to welcome every visiting religion from outside, and assimilate it by a gradual process of harmonization. It is, as they say, pleasant as well as fortunate

for China to possess these good characteristics in her culture. And the late Mr. Liang Chi-Chao, a great modern Chinese scholar, was the foremost of those optimists who held this view. On the other hand, there are also pessimists who regard it as a national disgrace for China to have no proper Religion, and exclaim with sorrow that our people are inferior to other people, and our country is not so good as other nations. To all these different points of views, I cannot and dare not agree. I think, China has actually an indigenous Religion and that is "Chinese Religion," of which Confucius and Laotse are both the greatest sages and saints.

But before we try to understand what is Chinese Religion, it may be advisable to have first a clear conception of what is Religion. Great philosophers and religionists; such as Kant, Fichte, Spinoza, Hegel, Schleiermacher and many others have at different times worked out various definitions of Religion, so various that it is needless for me to quote them here. I should like just to put forth my personal opinions. To speak synthetically, I think religion may be defined in two ways: one in a strict sense and the other in a broad sense. The former may be called the "Strict Religion"; and the latter, the "Broad Religion". And the Strict Religion must comprise at least five definite religious conditions: first, a definite Prophet to follow—as Jesus Christ of Christianity and Prophet Mohammed of Islam; second, a definite Supreme Being to worship—as God of Christianity and Allah of Islam; third, a definite communal organization to meet—as the Church of Christians and the Mosque of Muslims: fourth, a definite set of Ascetic Rules to observe—as the Ten Commandments of Christians and the four fundamental Institutions of Muslims; and fifth, a definite form of ceremony to practise—as the Prayer of both Christians and Muslims. Such Strict Religion may also be entitled "Constitution Religion." As for the Broad Religion, the definite religious conditions are by no means essential to its existence: when they are present, it is called a Religion; when they are absent, it can be called a Religion too. For the word "religion" is derived from the Latin word "*religio*" which originally means "awe" and "reverence" at the same time. In Chinese language, the term "religion" is composed

of two characters: first, "Tsung," meaning "respect," next "Chiao," meaning "teaching." When put together, they form the term of "Tsung-Chiao" meaning "respect for good teachings." That is to say, the teachings created and taught by the ancient sages and wise men are highly worthy of popular respect and observance, as guiding factors in their daily lives. And in course of time, these teachings gradually drew from the masses of the people their firm and solid faith and a strong and supreme power, which become more and more rigid and secure as time passes, generation after generation. So from this point of view, it follows that every great, valuable teaching created and taught by any wise sage can be called a Religion. The teaching of Lord Buddha is a Religion; that of Christ Jesus, a Religion; that of Prophet Mohammed, a Religion; that of Laotse, a Religion; and that of Confucius, also a Religion. In modern India, the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna is a Religion; so also is the teaching of Mahatma Gandhi and that of Poet Tagore. If my memory does not deceive me, I know Bertrand Russell, when staying and lecturing in China from 1920 to 1921, said that the Principle of Lenin had become a sort of Religion in Soviet Russia. And one American scholar called the San-Min Principle of the late Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, the leader and founder of the Chinese Republic, "a political Bible" and hence the Religion of China. This is the Broad Religion which may also be called the "Tradition Religion." The so-called definite religious conditions are merely a kind of means for a Religion to carry out its gospel into effect. Though the form of such means may be different in every religion, yet the fundamental spirit of all religions is the same at the root. It is a pity that human beings are generally prejudiced and sectarian and exclusive, and struggling against one another, when they happen to differ in creeds and beliefs. And it is a matter of deep regret that the so-called non-religious persons who shout for annihilation of religions have blindly fallen into one sect of religion, may be without being conscious of it themselves. Personally, I have faith in the Broad Religion; and what I mean by "Chinese Religion" is just this kind of Religion.

Having seen what is Religion, let us proceed to discuss what

is Chinese Religion; in other words, what is the significance and quality of Chinese Religion? What has it and how is it evolved? As China is one of the oldest civilized countries in the world, the origin of her religion is equally remote and ancient. Territorially also, China is one of the largest countries in the world, and the contents of her religion are equally complicated. In tracing the origin and studying the evolution of the Religions of various races, we find they are for the most part evolved from Totem to worship, from Fetishism to Theism, and from Polytheism to Monotheism. But the Chinese Religion is different from all these. In ancient China, there seemed to be no such thing as Totem, and throughout old Chinese classics and histories, no apparent traces of Totem can be found clearly. Though there existed some aspects similar to it to some extent, yet they were still different in nature from the Totemism of other peoples. As for the worship of living beings such as animals and plants, China has none of it, too. From the remote antiquity down to the present day, the Chinese have got the habit of worshipping Tien and Ti or Heaven and Earth, and the natural phenomena as the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Cloud, the Wind and the Thunder etc., and such earthly phenomena as the Mountain, the River and the Native soils etc., are all objects of worship. In the past, the Emperors, ministers and subjects had to worship these natural phenomena at different seasons in a prescribed form of sacrificial ceremony; and there were appointed, too, special officials to supervise the sacrifices. The Sovereign Emperor, when crowned, must worship Heaven and Earth; the feudal kings, Mountains and Rivers; the common masses, the native soils. The Emperor was also obliged to travel out personally for some time or send forth a deputy on any particular occasion to offer sacrifices to certain sacred Mountains and Rivers. When any extraordinary event happened there would then be a specific sacrifice. For instance, the Sun must be offered sacrifice in case of a Solar eclipse; the Moon, in case of a lunar eclipse; and the Cloud, the Wind, the Thunder and the Rain, in case of flood or drought. Besides these, different sacrifices were accorded to the change of seasons in accordance with the periodical rotation of the four seasons, Spring, Summer,

Autumn and Winter. To all these natural phenomena they assigned semi-divine and semi-personal attributes. In other words, they regarded them as personified Gods with feelings and volition. And of the natural phenomena, Heaven was the mightiest and supremest, which they sometimes also called Shang-Ti, the Highest King, or Tien-Ti, the Heavenly King. They thought that the whole cosmos, natural laws, mankind, and every being were all created and set in order by Heaven. It is stated in 'Old Chinese Classics' that "Heaven produces all the peoples with things and laws." Even all the vicissitudes of human life, weal and woe, fortune and misfortune, were considered to be dependent upon the will and command of Heaven. And in old Chinese books we often find such statements as: "Heaven favours the good-doer with hundreds of fortune, and punishes the evil-doer with hundreds of misfortune." The Emperors styled themselves Tien-Tzu or Son of Heaven, for they believed or were tempted to believe that they came by order of Heaven to be Emperors on the land and to rule over the peoples as a whole. That is why in old Chinese historical records it is said that "Heaven orders Wen-Wang to be king," and that "The Son of Heaven acts as a parent of the people and is the sovereign master of the world." Instances of similar nature are too numerous to mention. To describe this ideation, it is very hard to get any exact technical term in a foreign language; we may approximately call it Nature-worship, or Henotheism which is a branch of Polytheism, but can never confuse it with Fetishism. It resembles very much the religious features of the Vedic Period in ancient India, and the dates of their appearance also correspond to each other considerably.

Every Religion has a sort of myth about the creation of the world, such as the *Genesis* of the Old Testament saying that God created Heaven and Earth and all Beings in seven days, and the Brahmins asserting that Brahmā shaped the whole Universe and every Being in the world. Such myth is common in China, too. It is popularly believed by the Chinese people that Pan-Ku, a humanized semi-god with seven hands and eight feet, and eighteen thousand years old, was the Creator who first gave form

to the whole universe and every being. This great work of Pan-Ku is just similar to that of Brahmā. But a Chinese myth of this nature is only seen in popular anecdotes and cheap novels but not in serious Classics and orthodox history, so that it is often suspected to be mere imaginative creations of posterity, or possibly transformed stories of Brahmā under the Indian influence. And again, there are stories of birth effected by Spirit in every Religion. For instance, Māyā dreamt of a White Elephant and gave birth to the Buddha; Mary was influenced by the Holy Ghost and the result was birth of Jesus Christ. China is also rich in such fanciful stories. It is said that the mother of Huang-Ti was touched by a brilliant lightning, and gave birth to Huang-Ti; the mother of Emperor Yao was effected by a Red Dragon and she brought into life Yao; and the mother of Emperor Shun saw a beautiful Rainbow and gave birth to the illustrious son Shun. The great philosopher Laotse, it is also said, was born after his mother's seeing a shooting star; the great sage Confucius, after his mother's dreaming of a Black God. Such tales are too innumerable to be enumerated. But as they appear only in records of doubtful sources and not in any authentic classics, they have attracted no faith from the people at all. Besides, at the very beginning, every Religion is more or less coloured by the touch of divination or necromancy or fortune-telling. In China the art of divination was rather well-developed; the important affairs, public as well as private, were usually first put to a sort of divination so as to see whether the intended affair was lucky or ominous. The male diviner was named Hsi or Wizard, and the female, Wu or Witch, but generally they were indiscriminately called Wu-Hsi or Necromancers. Mentions of this sort of art can even be found in ancient classics and historical accounts, and the oldest Chinese classical book *Yi-Ching* (or Philosophy of Change) is regarded by some people as a sacred book of Divination. In reality, however, the book *Yi-Ching* is the most ancient and most valuable book of philosophy, somewhat similar in nature to the Vedas of India. Its fundamental significance is an exposition of the natural mystery of the Universe, and divination has very little, if any at all, to do with its underlying ideas.

What are mentioned above were the general aspects of the Chinese Religion in the earliest stage. In the course of time, the Chinese Religion has gradually transmitted itself from the worship of natural phenomena and Gods to that of human beings. And this worship may be again classified into two kinds: first, the worship of Great Sages and Heroes; and second, the worship of deceased ancestors. The former kind of worship precedes the latter and may be regarded as a prelude to it, too. Besides, what were meant by ancestors at first were, in fact, no other than the Great Sages and Heroes, for the family system was not yet brought into conceivable existence at that time. Take for example some quotations from old Chinese books, such as "The Yu Dynasty worships Huang-Ti and sacrifices Ti-Ku, respects Chuan-Yu as the ancestor and Yao as the forefather of the lineage; the Hsia Dynasty worships Huang-Ti and sacrifices Kun, respects Chuan-Yu as the ancestor and Yu as the forefather of the lineage; the people of Yin Dynasty worship Ti-Ku and sacrifice Ming, respect Sien as the ancestor and Tang as the forefather of the lineage; the people of Chou Dynasty worship Ti-Ku and sacrifice Tsi, respect Wen-Wang as the ancestor and Wu-Wang as the forefather of the lineage." What are meant here by "worship" and "sacrifice," "ancestor" and "forefather," are simply doing homage to the national great Sages and Heroes of the past who did not belong to any one single family or tribe. But why should they recognize such great Sages and Heroes to be their ancestors? That is only because of their reverence for the Source and Root and their gratitude to the Builders and Makers of the Country. So it is said in one old classical book that "All beings are originated from Heaven; all mankind; from one ancestry," and that "The remote ancestors are our Benefactors and Patrons."

Till the latter half of the Chou Dynasty known as the Eastern Chou Ages (770-247 B.C.), great sages and philosophers like Lao-tse and Confucius made their appearance in large number and then human knowledge was immensely enriched and the schools of thought widely developed, so much so that the most glorious Golden Age of culture was achieved in Chinese history. And it

was within this Age that the Chinese Religion began to undergo a striking revolution. The first attack on the traditional conceptions of Tien and Ti or Heaven and Earth was made by Lao-tse who said, "Neither Tien nor Ti is benevolent, for they make fools of all beings and let them devour one another." Lao-tse aimed at exposing the natural phenomena of the Universe with philosophical reasonings and inferences in order to establish a profound Natural Philosophy. He said on one occasion, "Man copies Earth; Earth, Heaven; Heaven, Tao (viz. Process); and Tao, Nature;" and on another, "Heaven, Earth, and all beings are born of Existence; and Existence, of nothingness;" and still a third time, "Previous to the formation of Heaven and Earth there exists something, shapeless and secret, independent without change and rotatory without fatigue, which may be the sole Mother of the Universe; not knowing how to nominate it, I choose to name it Tao or the Great Process." It is then obviously clear that Lao-tse regarded the Universe and all beings as the resultant effect of a natural process, beyond both the power of humanity and any creative will of Heaven or God. Hence the best way for human life is to follow Nature and to be harmonized with it; otherwise, artificialities in life will not only do harm to Nature but also lead to misfortunes and disturbances. That is why Lao-tse emphasized, "Nature is natural and cannot be artificially brought about by force; to force it into existence is to destroy it; to cling to it is to lose it."

With regard to Confucius, it may be said that he devoted himself to the study of things human, and paid extensive attention to actual life, but never seriously thought of, or even talked much about, Heaven and Earth, Natural Phenomena, Gods and spirits, etc. When one of his best disciples named Chi-Lu, inquired of him how to serve the Gods, he replied, "You don't know how to serve man yet, how can you ask about serving Gods? When questioned a second time by the same disciple about death, he again answered, "You don't know much about Life yet, how can you expect to know about Death?" On another occasion, one disciple by the name of Tzu-Kung asked the Master if the dead were conscious, then he answered: "If I say the dead are con-

scious, I am afraid offspring may neglect their living parents and only observe the formal rites at their death; if I say they are unconscious, I am afraid posterity may forget to bury and sacrifice their deceased ancestors. If you, my dear student, want to know the consciousness or unconsciousness of the dead, it is never too late to know it after your own death." Another disciple named Tzu-Chang questioned him, "Is it possible to know about ten generations?" Confucius said, "Yes, the Yin Dynasty followed the ceremonies of Hsia with certain omissions and additions, and that we know; the Chou Dynasty followed the ceremonies of Yin with certain omissions and additions, and that we know; so among the future Dynasties that may succeed Chou we can forecast even a hundred generations." And again, one disciple called Jan-You once asked the Master whether it was impossible to know of what existed before this Heaven and Earth came into being, then his reply was, "Not impossible, the past is the same as the present." "What do you mean?" interrogated the disciple in doubt again. Confucius continued, "With Heaven and Earth, there is no past nor present, and no beginning nor end. Were there no children first, could it be possible to have any children at all?" From this kind of lessons, we can easily see that it was things human and events real that Confucius studied, discussed and taught anywhere and everywhere, any time and every time. But it must not be misunderstood that Confucius ever denied the existence of Heaven and Earth, Gods and Spirits, or had no observation and conception of natural phenomena. One day, it is said, when rambling along the bank of a brook full of clear flowing water, Confucius exclaimed with a sigh, "Alas! Such is the flowing water, forwards and downwards, day and night!" In making this remark, he meant to show that Heaven and Earth and all beings are just like the flowing water, changing and changing without a moment's cessation. His impression was exactly equivalent to that of the Buddha who was deeply touched by "the inconstancy of the world." From this we know Confucius had a deep interest in the speculation of natural philosophy. In respect of Heaven and Earth, Gods and Spirits, he also said once, "A virtuous man has three awes: first,

awe for Heaven's decree; second, awe for great men; third, awe for the saints' words." At another time, he expressed his opinion on the offer of sacrifices, saying first, "When worshipping a God, one must feel as if He were visibly present;" and then, "If I did not partake in the ceremony of a sacrifice, it would be the same as no sacrifice at all." What a great reverence had he for Heaven's will and the sacrificial ceremony! His purpose in doing so, however, was only to impress upon the popular mind something which is really superior to the individual so that the people might always have a sense of awe and respect and never be poisoned by egoistic pride. He wanted to make the people appreciate the real value of Awe for Heaven's will and that of offering sacrifices to Spirits; so he emphasized on the other hand, "Worship the Gods and Spirits but keep away from them." For such things cannot be performed with any utilitarian motive; otherwise their original significance and value will be lost. In short, the teaching of Confucius is that the whole Universe and every Being are inconstantly changing, and that the most essential aspect for human life is the present Reality. It is only through the present that one can trace the past and hope to foresee the future, and it is only through things human that one can hope to extend his knowledge about Heaven and Earth, Gods and Spirits and every other Being. Therefore, in teaching man to be loyal and filial, faithful and moral, to know propriety and righteousness, to value shame and purity, and to practise all ways of self-culture, Confucius aimed at reaching the goal of Perfect Beauty and Perfect Good by harmonizing in the natural Universe, all the Beings and the whole humanity through the conduct of daily real life. It is then this ethical ideal that forms the very centre and unit of Chinese Religion, and builds up at the same time a very complete and beautiful ethical philosophy of life. And for this reason, it is called by some the Teaching of Ethics, or by some Yu-Chiao, the Teaching of Scholars and still by others Confucianism; but in reality, the most proper nomination of it may be the Chinese Religion.

Since the Dynasties of Chin and Han, foreign Religions have gradually marched into China and greatly influenced the primary

Chinese Religion. Among these, Buddhism is the first, Christianity next, and Islam last but not the least. And that which influenced the Chinese Religion most is Buddhism. Entering into China nearly two thousand years ago, it has now become a Second National Religion mingled and assimilated in the Chinese Religion in a dual progress. The Chinese Religion is fertilized by Buddhism and Buddhism in turn is enriched by the Chinese Religion. With respect to Christianity which came into China soon after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, it was first called in Chinese Chin-Chiao probably due to different pronunciation or incorrect translation of the word "Christian." At the beginning, it was brought into the country by the Jews but produced very insignificant effect. For the last few centuries, it has been revived and preached with great effort first by European and then by American missionaries and is today rather influential among the newly-educated people in urban communities. As regards Islam, it has been transmitted into China soon after the passing away of Mohammed, and become one of the important factors in the Chinese Religion, too. And in the recent history of China, the position of Muslims is rather striking and worthy of attention. In addition to these three great foreign Religions, there were also introduced into China, Zoroastrianism and other minor creeds, but producing very little or no effect upon the people, they died out gradually. But the Chinese Religion, in spite of the influence on it of such powerful foreign elements, is still able to maintain its own original shape and fundamental spirit. And the foreign Religions, once settled down in China, have become more or less "Chinese Naturalised" and may then be called parts of the Chinese Religion. For instance, the Buddhism of China can only be styled Chinese Buddhism; the Christianity of China, Chinese Christianity; and the Islam of China, Chinese Islam. The fact that China can contain and absorb, harmonize and utilize all the various foreign Religions so as to let them co-exist without jealousy and conflict is notably characteristic of the Chinese Religion. And this is why it can be so deep, so rich, and so extensive in volume and content.

At present, the manifest features of the Chinese Religion are quite complicated. In respect of form, the masses of the people

sacrifice the great Sages and Heroes and ancestors on the one hand, but worship Heaven and Earth, Gods and Spirits, Lord Buddha, Jesus Christ and Prophet Mohammed on the other. Almost in every family there is set up in the upper wall of the hall a holy Ancestral Shrine before which a lamp is lit and incense burnt every morning and every evening. On the occasion of marriage or funeral or any other similar occasion in different seasons, there must be offered to the ancestors a formal sacrifice. Among the families of the same Surname which represents the lineage of kinship, there are common Family Temples in which carefully prepared Sacrifice-feasts must be provided on the Birth-days of the ancestors or on other seasonal festivals. In the villages, there are Buddhist monasteries and oracular altars of other Gods where the peasants and especially women usually worship and offer sacrifices. In the cities, there are Mosques and Churches for the believers to hold their service and prayer respectively. But what is peculiarly funny is that sometimes the images of the Gods and saints of different Religions are consecrated in one and the same temple. In respect of spirit, the general folks of the nation accept ethical ideals on the one hand, but believe in Fatalism and necromancy on the other; they study the doctrines and principles of Buddhism, and Christianity and Islam on the one side, but welcome the various revolutionary theories and natural sciences on the other. Apparently all these appear contradictory, but actually they never fall short of the natural unity. For Nature and Universe, humanity and society, are by no means simple and one-sided; they are magnanimous and inclusive of anything and everything. The sea, for example, is not the home of any one single fish, nor the mountain that of any one single animal. In fact, nothing, but the petty bigotry and prejudice of man is incapable of being unified and assimilated in this world. In one old Chinese classical book, *The Great Learning*, we find a very fine proverb: "All beings live co-existently without injuring one another; all orbits lie parallelly without colliding against each other." The complexity of the Chinese Religion is just the concrete expression of this Spirit.

From what has been said in the foregoing passages, we can at least have a general idea about the significance, the quality,

and the evolution of the Chinese Religion. Now, for the sake of clearness, the essential points of this Religion may be summed up as follows:—

First, the Chinese Religion of which ethical virtue is the centre emphasizes real things human, and actual life ordinary, while its standard goal is Perfect Beauty and Perfect Good in human life. And it is expressed best in the old Chinese Classics —“ The way of the Great Learning is to illuminate the illustrious virtue, to enlighten the people, and to realize Perfect Good ; and “ The End must be Perfect Beauty and Perfect Good.”

Second, how to realize Perfect Beauty and Perfect Good is based upon the cultivation of individual personality. It is laid down as a sort of rule in a Chinese Classical book that “ The Ancients who wished to brighten the illustrious virtue in the world, first ordered well their own states. Wishing to order well their States, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their minds. Wishing to rectify their minds, they first purified their volitions. Wishing to purify their volitions, they first extended their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge depended upon the study of things. Things having been studied, knowledge became perfect. Knowledge being perfect, their volitions were then purified. Their volitions being purified, their minds were then rectified. Their minds being rectified, their persons were then cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were then regulated. Their families being regulated, their States were then well-ordered. Their States being well-ordered, the whole world could then be made tranquil and happy.”

Third, Humanity is a life of harmonious collectivity, not a life of exclusive individuality. The ultimate aim of humanity must be to achieve the well-being of all mankind; neither the individual, nor the race, nor the State is to be the unit of life. It is said in another Chinese classical book that “In the progression of the Great Natural Process, the whole world is free and common to all. The wise and the able should be chosen to rule; faithfulness and peacefulness, cultivated by and maintained among all.

Man must not only love his own parents and endear his own children, but also endeavour to give to the aged rest and comfort, make the grown-ups work and serve, and help the young grow in body and mind. The widower, the widow, the orphan, the bereft, the disabled and the sick should be offered proper treatment and carefully looked after. Every man has his duty, and every woman her place in the scheme of human life. Natural resources should be dug out of the ground and utilized, but not necessarily for private property but for the common good; personal abilities should be exerted from the body and mind and exercised, but not necessarily for selfish purposes. Thus, there will be no chance for conspiracy and intrigue, nor rise of theft and robbery, and every home can be safe with open gates at night. This is called Ta-Tung, or Great Harmonization."

Fourth, The Sublime end of Ta-Tung does not stop with the Great Harmonization of humanity only but also aims at the unification of the entire universe and every being. In old Chinese classical books we find various maxims of this teaching, such as, first, "All men are our brethren and all Beings our friends;" then, "Heaven and Earth co-exist with man, and all Beings are one;" then, "What is meant by Sincerity is the perfect cultivation not only of the individual ego but also of everything;" then "Great is the teaching of sages; cultivating all Beings profusely and communicating with Heaven sublimely, how glorious and magnificent it is!" and again, "Heaven gives sweet dew, Earth supplies delicious water; mountains produce wood for making implements; Rivers afford archaeological materials for study; the Phoenix and the Unicorn (popularly-believed fabulous Bird and Animal) play in the field and forest; divine Tortoise and kindly Dragon enjoy in the deep; and all other living beings, Mammal as well as Oviparous, can be observed and investigated."

From the first two points, the Chinese Religion may be called the Teaching of Ethics or Teaching of Humanism, and from the last two points, it may be called the Teaching of Ta-Tung or Great Harmonization or Universalism. But, consistently with traditional customs and practices, I should like to call it Chinese Religion.

PARLIAMENT PAPERS AND SPEECHES:
THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

CHAPTER VII

SECTION IV

Ramakrishna and Vivekananda



Swami Vivekananda
At the Parliament of Religions at Chicago (1893)

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND THE RELIGION OF MAN

SWAMI ADYANANDA

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Through the great achievements of science, the world has become a small place today. Nations with different traditions, histories, ideals and standards have become next-door neighbours, and naturally thinking people are asking whether there can be a universal religion. I think there can be. But religion, to be universal, must not be uniform or standardized. It should be a comprehensive one, which will incorporate within itself the best ideals of the different peoples. In the midst of its diversities there should be a harmonizing unity. Such a religion I designate as 'the religion of man.' Teachings and experiences of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda lead us to its conception and I shall point out to you some of its salient features. Let us try to trace the origin of religion and see its psychological basis.

If we go into the history of religion, we find that it started when man had begun to ponder deeply over the mysteries of human existence. After serious thinking some philosophers have observed that 'the origin of the world, i.e. its primary creative impulse, is war, conflict and confusion.' One of the Greek philosophers has said that war is the mother of all human existence. Others have held that the world was moving in gradual evolution to higher and higher stages. While still others have opined that the world is only a cycle of mechanical forces and its final destiny is self-destruction and human life has no ultimate goal. Then in the midst of this grim picture of despair, has come forth the voice of man, I mean, the voice from the deepest layer of the human soul, seeking a more fundamental solution of his existence. To meet this demand of the human soul, we find that there have appeared in the world's history great spiritual personages whose messages have taught us to find a solution of the problem of

human existence through 'life and living' rather than through mere intellectual speculation. It is, to be very brief, the message of the spiritualization of life. We may make an intellectual effort to solve the problem of existence, we may develop science through our knowledge of the objective world, but unless and until we see that the fundamental solution of life's problems comes only through 'spiritualization', these problems will ever remain unsolved. What is the meaning of spiritualization? It means the inward march to experience the Divine Reality. This inwardness of the religious man makes his ideals and outlook in life different from those of the man without religion.

It is not possible for me within such a short time to tell you how religious consciousness of man has grown from its primitive stage till it found its consummation in the union of the human soul with the Divine, but I shall point out to you some of the fundamental differences between the religious and the irreligious. The ideal of the one says, 'The world is for me:' but the ideal of the other says, 'Man lives best when he lives for humanity and considers it a privilege to give himself but by bit for his brothers' (Applause). The irreligious monster-man says, 'An eye for an eye ; a tooth for a tooth:' but the man of religion says, 'It is the most heroic feature of a man's life to pardon those who have put him on the cross and thus obey the Divine law of sacrifice and renunciation.'

How are we to develop the spirit of sacrifice and renunciation in practical life? Well, we can do it when we see the deeper ultimate purpose behind all our activities and read their spiritual meaning. Work has no meaning unless it teaches us balance and gradually leads us inward and helps us to develop introspection. Man is not a biological product alone ; he has innate spiritual greatness. But that is somehow lost and he is a slave of circumstances. *Religion in its universal significance teaches man to regain his lost freedom and Divine Heritage.* /

These are the general principles of all religions. A man may belong to any church, denomination or creed, but if his attitude towards life is one of expansion and if his consciousness marches upward, then he belongs to the religion of man.

Differences of doctrines and dogmas, temples and churches, books and rituals, have only secondary importance to a man whose soul is hungry for spiritual food.

It has been said that religions have been disintegrating forces in human society, and looking at religion from the angle of its effect on human history, many people have lost faith in all religions and are strongly in favour of banishing religion and God from this world. These anti-religious people point out to us the negative results of religion. One can understand the viewpoint of such people. When religion is entirely identified with theological dogmas and meaningless rituals, it certainly narrows down the human mind and instead of helping man towards higher spiritual evolution, it becomes the cause of disintegration and hatred.

Here we find the great contribution which Sri Ramakrishna, the modern prophet of religious synthesis, has made. He has made a bold declaration to the world. By realizing himself the truths of different religions he has challenged those narrow, dogmatic ideas which the sectarian ministers of all religions have preached and which have created dissensions amongst the followers of different faiths.

Apparently there are so many contradictions in the different religions, philosophies and rituals of the world. This is the viewpoint of the orthodox and fanatical people. They say other religions than their own contain only half-truths. In the medieval age, there were fights in the name of religion and all diabolical acts were perpetrated. Now the modern man, with the widening of his vision, admits that there may be half-truths in other religions, but holds that his religion is the only true religion, because it holds the monopoly of all divine revelations. But are not these dogmatic assertions foolish? Sri Ramakrishna experienced in his life that all religions ultimately lead to the same goal. What is the meaning of synthesis of religions? Is it a mere pious dream or is it a mere philosophical speculation? Religion, finally, is response of the human personality to one fundamental, infinite, spiritual reality. Man, in search of that truth, has visualized and experienced it variously at different times. So, those who

say that their religion is the only true revelation of the infinite truth, are limiting the limitless and only expressing the narrowness of their outlook. They cannot see that there may be different snapshots of the same reality at different times. When we realize the fundamentality of religion, we can understand the meaning of synthesis. When a person has really understood Sri Ramakrishna he will neither claim that his religion is the only true religion nor curse or damn others' religions. Sri Ramakrishna was a unique personality with full divine manifestation. I wish this Parliament of Religions, organized in memory of that great personality, will impress this truth of the synthesis of all religions on every person who has attended its sessions. In this critical time of the world's history, we need it for so many reasons. May Sri Ramakrishna illumine our mortal vision and lead us from darkness to light!

VIVEKANANDA AND SOCIAL SERVICE

ADVOCATE SANTOSH KUMAR BASU, M.A., B.L.

Ex-Mayor, Corporation of Calcutta

I consider it a great honour and privilege to be called upon to take part in the deliberations of this great and august assembly. From far and near great scholars, thinkers and seekers after truth have come to our beloved city and gathered under the shadow of this Parliament of Religions, the shadow of a mighty tree with its diverse branches, all drawing their sap from one common nature, all trying to inculcate and illustrate the one Divine Truth, all drawing their sustenance embedded in the gems of one common spirituality. It is only fit and proper that in the programme of this Parliament, a place should have been found for the great and all-absorbing subject of "Social Service," and with whose name should that subject be linked up, but with the name of Swami Vivekananda, to whom service of the poor became a burning faith, and who had identified the cause of humanity with the worship of the Divine Being? Those of you who have studied the life and

speeches of Swami Vivekananda are aware that after the Paramahansa had departed from this life, Swami Vivekananda, in the course of the great and mighty tour that he undertook throughout the length and breadth of Hindustan, came down and reached the shores of the Indian Ocean at Cape Comorin and took his seat near the limitless sea. It was on that holy of holy spots that the great inspiration dawned upon him. When he looked upon the plains and across the mighty waters, the great pain and remorse and agony of the miserable millions of India suddenly dawned upon his soul. He had come into direct personal contact with the down-trodden masses of his own country and he had seen the misery, the poverty which was one long, long story of their lives from birth to death. He had come into direct personal touch with the millions of his countrymen who did not know what was meant by two meals a day. He had intimately known the ignorance, the misery and all the untold sufferings which were the ordinary lot of his countrymen. And the idealist and the dreamer and the mystic had turned to be a practical sociologist, and the fiery patriot in him had given place to a cogent and clear thinker on the poverty of India. It was there at Kanyā-Kumārī that the mission, which he undertook of his own accord in later years, suddenly dawned upon him,—that he would go to the West and find out the ways and means of improving the lot of his countrymen. And it was there that he conceived the great idea of rearing a great Brotherhood or Order of social service which would undertake the relieving of the miseries of his countrymen. His letters written from America reveal his burning desire to serve his countrymen. His was a mighty call and it was he who has left this great heritage, this great gift, the Gospel of Service, to his countrymen in all walks of public life. Consider our political situation now, and you will find that the great gift, the great heritage left by Swami Vivekananda has been utilized by our Indian National Congress in the adoption of its constructive programme. It was Swami Vivekananda who chalked out his mighty scheme of social service for all workers in the public cause, and it was he who inspired the idea of social service which is now a living faith with the Congress. It was he who declared, "Let each of us pray day

and night for the down-trodden millions in India who are held fast by poverty, priest-craft and tyranny,—pray day and night for them, I care to preach religion to them more than to the high and the rich. I am no metaphysician, no philosopher, nay, no saint. But I am poor, I love the poor. I see what they call the poor of this country,¹ and how many there are who feel for them! What an immense difference in India! Who feels there for the two hundred millions of men and women sunken in poverty and ignorance? Where is the way out? Who feels for them? They cannot find light or education. Who will bring light to them—who will travel from door to door bringing education to them? Let these people be your God—think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly—the Lord will show you the way.” Mark these words. And again: “Him I call a *mahātman* whose heart bleeds for the poor, otherwise he is a *durātman*.”²

Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, I say, the Swami's great ideal of social service has influenced our political life, ideals and methods to a very great extent. As I have stated, the constructive programme of the Indian National Congress, which fills a large place in the public life of India today, is a direct gift from Swami Vivekananda. Here again the ideal of the late Desabandhu Chittaranjan Das is seen. You may remember that Desabandhu chalked out the constructive programme for the Corporation of Calcutta. And in that programme what were the items taking the foremost place?—medical relief for the poor, free primary education for the poor, improving the housing conditions of the poor, improving the material conditions of the poor, so far as it lay in the power of the Corporation and so on. Out of eight or nine items in the programme, as many as six or seven were directed to the amelioration of the sufferings of the people. I am here only to remind you that the great Vivekananda was not merely a preacher, was not only a great spiritual thinker, but that his work has coloured our whole being. Take the Ramakrishna Mission which he has left behind him. What is the work its missionaries are doing? Whenever and wherever there is an earthquake, or

¹ The United States of America.

² Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, Vol. V (Epistles I), p. 45.

outbreak of famine, or any other calamity, they rush to the succour of the poor, they rush to the relief of humanity irrespective of caste, creed or colour. They are at the door of the afflicted, carrying the message of hope and peace. I had occasion three years ago to come into direct official touch with them in connection with the Bihar Earthquake Relief. The Mayor's Fund of Calcutta took interest in the Ramakrishna Mission as an effective organization for rendering prompt methodical relief to the deserving in the afflicted areas. The Mission was already in the field of work and its workers were operating throughout the affected area. A sum of Rs. 60,000 from the Mayor's Fund was contributed, which enabled the Mission to meet more than half the total expenditure. The result was immediate and most satisfactory. The Mission undertook the burden most cheerfully and conducted relief in the different centres of Bihar. Not a word of complaint was addressed to us from any quarter. That—the Gospel of active service—I say, is the great heritage left by the Swami and it is but proper that this afternoon we are paying our humble homage to the memory of Swami Vivekananda, the greatest disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

RAMAKRISHNA'S GOSPEL OF HARMONY

PROF. BATUK NATH BHATTACHARYA

Calcutta University

The celebration of the birth-centenary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa all over the world is a unique event in history. There is perhaps no other man of religion of recorded memory within a century of whose advent races and countries widely different so enthusiastically joined to honour his name and to reverently study his life and message. The way to Dakshineswar, the hallowed seat of his sainthood, is like the Road to Rome and is worn with the footsteps of pilgrims that come from the ends of the Earth.

' Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet ' and yet today Jesus of Nazareth sways a third of the population of the globe. The highest

idea in spiritual harmony that bids fair to be an international cult is the gift of India which stands perhaps lowest in the scale of nationhood. How to explain this paradox? No doubt science has contracted both time and space and made the world a much smaller place than it ever before was. No doubt also an age of journalism has perfected the arts of publicity. But publicity like the microphone only multiplies echoes. It does not generate the original fact. And the fact of supreme moment is the advent of Sri Ramakrishna in the damp low-lying fever-stricken plains of Bengal, in an obscure hamlet, in a family that lacked high social status, the distinction of learning and the advantages of wealth, and this at a time when the rest of the world was forging breathlessly ahead in the technical and liberal arts, in scientific knowledge, in commerce and conquest.

For, indeed, in Europe and America the glory of the 19th century lay in the progress of science, in mechanical inventions, in social and political reorganization, in colonial expansion and industrial prosperity. The genius of the West moved mainly on the practical and the intellectual plane. Impact with reason and science shook the old bases of faith. The church and particularly the Romish had to fight hard to maintain its hold and for self-defence had often to make compromises with science and liberalism and even to borrow the weapons of its adversaries.

And the religious movements that occurred had also an immediate purpose of utility—setting the household of Christian faith in order, disciplining and knitting together the clergy to fight the usurpations of the state upon their rights and privileges, reviving the fervour of the ancient churches or repairing the social machinery and correcting patent evils and abuses. People were swayed by the religion of thought and criticism more than they cared for that of faith and revelation. From the oppressive weight of activism and secularism escape was sought by some of the finest spirits in championing a restored paganism—Hellenic or Germanic medieval, in exotic cults, in withdrawal from society or in determined negation of science and reason. People looked back regretfully to “the days when spiritual faith and hope and love were the air which young souls breathed, days when a man

would go to the seers to inquire of God and when God himself seemed to be not far from every one of us." (Dowden). The malady of the age was freedom and pessimism.

Few indeed, says Benedetto Croce,—and even these few but little heeded and with small results—were the poets, thinkers, seers, apostles who introduce light and warmth into the war which in all times and under all conditions, is perpetually fought in the minds and hearts of men, and which has perpetual need of this aid, this guidance. Nor could the gap be filled by physicists, naturalists, sociologists who at this time were indeed not wanting but who from their very nature are of use to technique but not to what is above or at the basis of every technique.

The mood of religious despair finds poignant expression in the poetry of cultured thought as in M. Arnold's lines:

The Sea of Faith

Was once, too, at the full and round earth's shore
Lay like the holds of a bright girdle furl'd,
But now I only hear
Its melancholy long withdrawing roar
Retreating to the breath
Of the night wind down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

The world, which seems

To lie below us like a land of dreams
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain.

In the words of Croce, "the religious and ethical impulse was weakened, the capacity for inventing and transforming the requisite concepts was diminished, the inner life of the conscience was mortified, that life in which alone suffering and sorrow and anguish can be gathered into purifying travail and converted into consoling and revivifying forces."

The law of compensation thus works inexorably and inner illumination and the glamour of the world's goods have rarely

gone together. Perhaps it is a Divine dispensation that the Beatitudes should not merely cheer and uphold but also spring out of the lowly and the meek, the down-trodden and the poor in spirit. And it was reserved for India destitute materially and cast down politically to hold aloft the torch of faith by an unbroken succession of souls that hungered and thirsted for God—Devendranath, Dayananda, Keshub Chandra, Vishuddhananda, Bijoy Krishna and Paramahansa Ramakrishna—who revived the spiritual heritage of India that goes back beyond the Buddha to the very fathers of the race, the seers of the Vedas.

The life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna have a two-fold significance, as affecting the land of his birth and the world at large. But in both these aspects he shines forth by his Gospel of harmony. As an Indian saint he stands for the synthesis of the ideas and principles of his predecessors. World-history is viewed comprehensively by some modern thinkers as a continuous economic struggle between the haves and the have-nots, as a ceaseless class-war against the vested interests, force, numbers and fight being the decisive factors. Swami Vivekananda gave a nobler aspect to the strife when he said, "It is the privilege of every aristocracy to dig its own grave."¹ In the religious sphere at any rate, self-denial and sacrifice have been the motives of liberalization rather than compulsion. And the *ethos* of every race has produced timely personalities that by noble suffering and all-embracing love turned exclusive cults and expensive rituals into simpler forms available to larger and yet larger sections of the people. The religion of the New Testament replacing sacrifices by faith and penitence, and stern law by free grace has been cited as an instance. India also has witnessed the same process of broadening and popularization of religion and its observances. The emphasis in Vedic religion is on *Srauta-karma*, i.e. on sacrifices expensive, elaborate, various and on a social structure of the privileged three *varnas*. Buddhism and Jainism were early manifestations of a natural reaction. The cults of the *Smṛitis* and

¹ "It is good and appropriate that every caste of high birth and privileged nobility should make it its principal duty to raise its own funeral pyre with its own hands."—Swami Vivekananda's *Complete Works*, "Modern India."

Purāṇas which were followed were the outcome of the forces of conservation and adaptation. But the antique social order was largely modified and changed by the absorption of the aborigines and non-Aryan tribes under genealogical fictions and legends. New gods and new forms of worship were evolved while preserving an appearance of continuity with the past. The last supreme effort to revive and strengthen the Vedic religion and social order was made by Kumārila and Śaṅkara—the two granite pillars of Hindu faith. But the growing menace of foreign invasion and the varied aspirations of a vast mixed population before long turned their projects into a mere cry of the heart and an unrealized dream. Our social history since the first millennium is a record of the rise of successive religious teachers—chiefly Śaivite and Vaiṣṇavite—who by their powerful ministry have helped to bring the essentials of faith and spiritual endeavour to the hearts and lives of the masses and thus to fulfil the ultimate destiny of Hinduism which is the leavening of the entire population of India. These devout God-intoxicated souls under the urge of a generous love of their own kind dedicated themselves to the noble work of spreading the light and joy of true spirituality over the widest commonalty. Vallabhāchārya declared *pushpī* or grace to be the way of salvation. Śrī Chaitanya held devotion to the Lord Kṛishṇa to be the purifier of every kind of sin and uncleanness, and in his overflowing love for man disregarded the distinctions of caste and with open arms embraced men of other faiths. And Śrī Rāmānuja proclaimed that *prapatti* (*śaraṇāgati*) i.e. self-surrender to the Lord as the sole refuge is the privilege of all, high and low, regenerate and unregenerate alike. Rāmānanda held initiation as the mighty lever which raised even the untouchables and the degraded to an equal footing with Brahmins. Nāmadeva, the devotee of Viṭṭhṭhaladeva, of Pandharpura upheld pure theism. In one of his *bhajans* he sang:

“The pitcher is filled and the water brought to bathe the god. There were forty-two hundreds of thousands of animals in it. There was Viṭṭhṭhala already in them, whom shall I bathe?”

Tukārām was an outspoken opponent of ‘Brahminolatry.’ He says in one of his utterances: “He who calls himself a Brahmin

and goes on in his usual way should not be spoken to and is a buffoon."

It is an irony of fate that every saint and reformer ends by founding a new sect and the spirit of intolerance which he seeks to kill is quickened into new life by the jealous adherence to his own doctrines. And so India had need of a prophet to trumpet forth the basic truth of all religions and the spirit of largest tolerance as essential to peace on earth and goodwill among men. It was destined for Sri Ramakrishna to glimpse this great need of India which was also the need of the world. He came to fulfil and not to destroy. Learning did not unfold her ample page to his eyes and science and philosophy were to him as a sealed book. In undated antiquity the Vedic seers had looked into the heart of Reality and bodied forth their inspired experiences in the Upanishads. To the Paramahansa as their true scion came the vision of the highest Unity through the traditional unwritten wisdom that passes current among Indian monks and *sādhus*—an unsunned, unsuspected treasure which the seekers of knowledge have not yet explored or appraised. Golden aphorisms, gems of apologies that dart light into the mystery of human nature, rules of behaviour and forms of greeting and benediction that make the whole world kin—these are the secret of their power over men. The essence of sacred books permeates their talks, the conclusions of philosophy are imbedded in their familiar maxims together with the truths of mystic experience. Of this rich stream Sri Ramakrishna had drunk deep and hence the enthralling quality of his own discourses aptly called the *Kathāmṛita*—the Elixir of sayings.

But still greater is the value and significance of his teachings to humanity. For the acceptance of this message the world had been prepared by history, sociology and comparative ethics and religion. All these have joined to discount racial pride and arrogance and to prove the sameness of human nature irrespective of age, clime and race. Every spin of the globe brings us to a clearer perception of the truth that our differences are superficial but our likeness is essential. Comparison and analysis reveal the basic oneness of the race. The mists are rolling away and we see

before us under the white light of Truth the limbs and organs, powers and faculties of this marvellous handiwork of the Creator—the ends of whose being reach out to the plant, the bird, the ape, the brute and the angel, who is a pilgrim between birth and death, who is rooted to his small plot of land and forgets himself in the moment and again in thought wanders through eternity and to the limits of space, who is of the earth, earthly and again of heaven, heavenly, who is weaker than a worm, minuter than a grain of sand and yet by his Reason and Knowledge comprehends the whole Universe and looks into the very thoughts and purposes of the All-wise and All-powerful Maker.

The sacred books of all ages in the East and in the West have sought to keep man conscious of this truth. The aim of civilization is to achieve unity in the midst of diversity. For by nature men are like the unnumbered grains of sand on the sea-shore, each discrete and separate from the rest. Each follows his own whims and impulses, seeks his own safety and interest. Social institutions tend to remove this isolation of man from man. The family, the clan, the tribe, the community, the nation—each step in this series points to a larger association. Parties and schools of thought, religion and state all promote the work of unification. The most potent of these instruments of unification, however, is religion which rises above racial prejudices and communal narrowness and tends to gather all into a brotherhood by stimulating enthusiasm for some sublime ideal.

But when we speak of religion and its function, by the peculiar cast of our minds, we think of the several historic religions and the parts they have played in the evolution of the races of men. And we picture to ourselves rivalry and conflict among the faiths like the struggle for existence in the animal creation. And the same law seems to rule the spiritual world as the sphere of war and politics and commerce—only conversion and compulsion instead of conquest and annexation. Such at any rate is the outlook of the two great proselytizing religions of the present day—Mohammedanism and Christianity. Each cherishes the dream of being one day the Church Catholic, of claiming the allegiance of all mankind and guiding and moulding their spiritual interests and

aspirations. But the religions of a still older date—Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism and Confucianism are without this aggressive energy and no longer strain after this world-vision. Nevertheless each claims to be the one true path leading to the highest spiritual well-being. And thus the hubbub grows—the discord of slogans and the clash of dogmas and in the midst of it, the still sad music of True Religion grows faint. And distracted by the rank foliage mankind misses the balm that heals the sores of the spirit and the fruit that gives life. To a world sick of this strife of faiths Sri Ramakrishna brought his Gospel of Harmony—a reiteration of the ancient Hindu wisdom—that the paths men follow are numberless but their goal, the ultimate principle in which they end and merge is the same even as the rivers of the earth discharge themselves in the boundless ocean. Herein he was truly the son of the Great Mother that he worshipped. No mother even delights in the fights of her children. And the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna if laid to heart in the right spirit will yet knit into a brotherhood men of diverse sects and religions, however formidable the barriers that sever them now. The message of the Paramahansa is the message of India—India which in her palmy days had dispensed to the countries of Asia not merely food for the body but also out of the overflowing joy and light in her soul the living bread for the spirit. She sent her sons across her borders not in armed legions but as ochre-clad missionaries of faith to preach to the peoples the sanctity of all life, the mystery of being and the supreme value of love, peace and goodness.

Civilization has been variously defined by Western thinkers. Progress, organization, liberty, social amelioration, a high status for womankind, diffusion of knowledge, science and technical skill—all these singly or together are taken to be its essential marks.. But as Emerson says: "These arts add a comfort and smoothness to house and street life ; but a purer morality, which kindles genius, civilizes civilization, casts backward all that we hold sacred into the profane as the flame of oil throws a shadow when shined upon by the flame of the Bude-light." In India this higher morality has ever meant an intimate realization of the oneness of

all being and sensibility to the reactions of pain and pleasure in all forms of life. The saints and seers of all races according to the degree of inner illumination have had glimpses of these truths. They felt for all sentient creatures and thrilled with their fears and pains and joys. But in India these truths are systematized into a living cult. History traces veterinary hospitals and asylums to Buddhistic times as also the abhorrence of animal slaughter which is carried to an extreme by Jainism. The pious Hindu before he plucks leaves and flowers for the worship of his deity begs leave and pardon of the tree and creeper. And the householder when he performs oblations to the fathers does not omit to pray "May the world from Brahmā to the blade of grass be satisfied." All this is the outcome of the intense and pervasive God-consciousness which the Upanishads in a thousand ways inculcate:—

"The one God hidden in all beings, pervading all, the indwelling spirit of all creatures, swaying all action, lodged in all forms of life, the sole witnessing mind that has no attributes."

"The one dwells in Heaven inert like a Tree. By that Person all this is filled. There is nothing other than Him and no one minuter or greater."

The rule of conduct that such a faith yields was pointed in the ancient verse of the *Yajur-Veda*:

"May all beings see me with the eye of a friend.
May I see all creatures with the eye of a friend."

Is Sri Ramakrishna an *Avalāra*? To believers and unbelievers alike it is a silly question. To the former it admits of no doubt. To the modern mind it is hardly worth serious attention. The Hindu not lost to the traditional mentality of his race feels no surprise to learn that the Lord hath once again manifested Himself in His living temple. To him the history of his own land, nay of the whole world, is spanned by the shining figures in whom Boundless Grace has chosen to reveal Himself from age to age to mitigate the woes and to redeem the souls of His creatures. And the series will continue till the last sinner is saved and the last

worm attains divinity. To him the world-drama is a progressive revelation and countless are the incarnations of God.

To a layman likely to be befogged by the subtleties of the schoolmen, the strongest proof of the Incarnation is the living miracle that the Man was. For

What is the course of life
Of mortal men on the earth?
Most men eddy about
Here and there—eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft and hurl'd in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving
Nothing ; and then they die,
Perish—and no one asks
Who or what they have been
More than he asks what waves
In the moonlit solitudes mild
Of the boundless Ocean, have swell'd,
Foam'd for a moment, and gone.

A searching self-analyst like Marcus Aurelius may well ask :

Whose soul do I properly possess? A child's or a youth's?
A woman's? Or a tyrant's? Some brute or some wild beast's?

And the muddy vesture of decay may well make him exclaim :

How base and putrid every common matter is! Water and dust and, from the mixture of these, bones, and all that loathsome stuff that our bodies do consist of ; so subject to be infected and corrupted.

What a contrast to this life of the multitude was the beatific trance in which the Paramahansa passed his days on earth! Though in the flesh, he with his every breath hungered and thirsted for God and never had a doubt of the reality of his Divine Mother Whom he worshipped with such passionate adoration, any more than he had of his own existence. Like the flame of the candle that in still air steadily rises skyward, like the magnetic needle that unfailingly turns towards the Pole, his soul ever pointed

Heavenward. Rank and power, love and wealth after which the world runs mad lost all relish for him and were replaced by poignant yearnings, visions, raptures and exaltations that had their source in the unapparent Reality. No wonder the voice of scepticism was silenced, and unbelief shamed in his presence: His teachings harmonized while upholding the two imperishable ideals of life—the domestic and the ascetic—which have their roots deep down in human nature. A householder to outward view he was yet the prince of ascetics—*Yatirāja*—at heart. And it is no mere coincidence that his blessed name that is on the lips of millions today joins the two divine persons who vitally influence life and character in Hinduism more than any other of the numerous gods that make up the Hindu pantheon—Rāma the ideal son, brother, husband and father, and Kṛishṇa who has been described by Swami Vivekananda as “the great illustration of non-attachment.”

In dwelling thus devoutly on the life and message of Sri Ramakrishna we turn our back on the grim realities of modern life and the two spectres that are waiting to fly at each other's throat for mastery of the world—Nationalism and Communism. The former whether wearing the face of Naziism, Fascism or Imperialism values life according to the colour of the skin and looks upon alien races opposed to its interests and aspirations as so many flies to be ruthlessly crushed under the wheel of its own progress, thus illustrating the German poet Grillparzer's parabolic formula: Humanity through nationality turns to bestiality. The latter, though it may bring about the ascension of those social strata that have hitherto been submerged and passive in public life, seeks as the means thereto to recast and refashion human nature itself by overthrowing all old institutions and weaning man from all the sentiments, beliefs and convictions that have led him to his present condition. Amidst ‘the alarms and excursions,’ jostling and trampling and crushing, bloodshed and lust of power that the collision of these secular ideals means, the celebration of the birth-centenary of Sri Ramakrishna may seem an incongruity, an anachronism. And yet the heart of humanity turns wistfully to it. For we have not yet reached that evil day when the pieties and sanctities that have chastened and disciplined and consoled the

race hitherto will lose their value and appeal, when both Heaven and Home will be meaningless words, when the highest self-realization for the individual will be soulless service of the state and every state a deadly, irresistible, fighting machine, and mankind prey on itself like monsters of the deep. But till that day comes when the dictates of the economic man will be the supreme law and the soul turn into a fiction and abstraction, and all that lies before and after and beyond the fevered dream of the senses will be blotted out of human consciousness, let us, for the sake of what joy, relief and consolation we can get, hearken to the chimes of the bells that ring from the opposite banks of the sacred Bhāgirathī, mingle with the murmur of its ripples and proclaim to a world hushed and bathed in the light of the rising sun the eternal verities—Purity, Goodness and Faith.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

SARAT CHANDRA BOSE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW

Calcutta

I have been asked to say a few words on the "Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna." It is a subject on which I do not feel competent enough to speak. I shall, however, endeavour to place before you what I consider to be the most significant of all his teachings. His teachings and sayings have been printed in book-form. They have also been translated into different languages spoken by the different civilized nations of the world and are more or less available to all of us.

This great teacher was Bengal's contribution to the world in the last century. Everybody knows that a century back he was born among us and half a century back he left us. We and the rest of the world came under the influence of his teachings during his earthly pilgrimage and even more so, after he had completed his journey.

The Swami Vivekananda interpreted the teachings of his Master from various standpoints. The great Max Müller also

interpreted him. And only the other day, the greatest scholar of our times, Dr. Brajendra Nath Seal, interpreted him in his address as President of this historic gathering.

To all these interpretations it is difficult to add anything new.

To my mind, Sri Ramakrishna's mode of approach to different systems of worship inculcated in the different religions of the world is his special contribution to the history of the progress of religions in the present age.

Raja Rammohan was undoubtedly the first among our scholars to make a comparative study of the different systems of religion. He is rightly called the "father of the Science of Religion." In the study of this particular branch of knowledge Rammohan wanted to find out the common factors of the different religions. In the comparative study of Rammohan, one can find the successive stages of the growth and degeneration of each particular religion. He adopted the process of elimination of the lower stages of each religion. Therefore, it was no wonder to hear from him the words, "Hence falsehood is common to all religions without distinction."

Now let us turn to the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. He approached the different systems of religion not as a scholar like Rammohan but as a devotee. His objective was to realize God in and through the peculiar methods of worship in different religions. He made strenuous attempts to achieve this end. And he *did realize* God through each and every religion he practised. He practised Hinduism of different types as also Islam and Christianity. He passed through all the stages of each religion. He did not eliminate a single stage and he came to the conclusion: "Every religion is true." His teachings should not be confounded with the teaching that "There is truth in every religion"—which was probably the opinion of Brahmananda Keshab Chandra Sen.

If Rammohan taught us the *science* of religion, Sri Ramakrishna taught us the *art* of God-realization in and through the multifarious practices of each religion. This, in my humble opinion, is the distinction between the teachings of the two great

teachers of religion that Bengal gave birth to in the first and in the last quarter of the XIXth century:

Sri Ramakrishna's teachings did not disturb a single religion of the world. Unlike other great teachers of religion he did not create a new religion of his own. He left no new religion as his legacy unto us. He did not ask anybody to change his religion with a view to realizing God. He did not consider it necessary for him to do so. His method was entirely different, wonderfully original. His teachings prove that each religion gives ample scope and opportunity to realize God. That was the distinctive peculiarity of his teachings. Towards the end of his sojourn in this world Swami Premananda, one of his disciples, heard him pray, "Mother, do not let me become famous by leading those who believe in beliefs! Do not expound beliefs through my voice."

If we trace the history of the development of Sri Ramakrishna's mind, we find that, at the very beginning, the influence of that great woman of East Bengal, called Bhairavī Brāhmaṇī, acted like a miracle on the young devotee Ramakrishna. About this great woman, the Swami Vivekananda said, "She was not only learned but was the embodiment of learning. She was learning itself in human form." "And hers was the first help he (Sri Ramakrishna) received." We find that this Bhairavī taught Sri Ramakrishna the practices of no less than sixty-four different Tantras and along with it the realization of different "*Rasas*" of Bengal Vaishṇavism of the Chaitanya cult. Śākta and Vaishṇava are the two great sectarian religions of Bengal. In theory and practice, in fact, on many points they contradict each other. But Sri Ramakrishna had easy access to his goal even through these two entirely different systems of religion. The Bhairavī Brāhmaṇī certainly helped him to perform what seemed to be an impossible task. I am afraid the Sri Ramakrishna literature has not done sufficient justice to this great Bhairavī of East Bengal.

The votaries of different religions have had many battles against one another, not always to their credit, and at times to their shame. We learn from the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna that the followers of one religion have no reason whatever to fight

against the followers of another religion for the sake of realizing God. It is a teaching of tremendous significance in modern Bengal and in modern India. May I hope and pray that the significance of this teaching of one who embraced within him the whole multiplicity of men and the whole multiplicity of Gods will be realized more and more in the days to come?

THE SPIRIT OF VIVEKANANDA

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I esteem it a very great privilege to be asked to say a few words at this historic gathering on the subject appointed for me by Prof. Sarkar.¹ So far as it is given to a layman to understand that subject, it strikes me that one would best bring out the spirit of Vivekananda by styling him Vivekananda the Conqueror. I venture to say, the word 'conqueror' reveals the essence, the spirit, the very self of the man. He was born to conquer—need I add the trite reminder?—not territories, but men's souls. The more one tries to estimate him, the more one realizes that he was in the direct line of affiliation to Him Whose invincibility wrung the cry from the heart of the Roman Emperor, "Thou conquerest still, Oh pale Galilean!" and also to Him Who enunciated the immortal law of human nature in the words that come ringing in our ears across the night of time, "Hatred is not killed by hatred, hatred is killed by love." Buddhism conquered the soul of Asia, Christianity that of Europe. What did our Conqueror of modern times achieve? In my humble estimation Vivekananda set out to conquer the souls of men like you and me whose minds are wedded to the methods and the outlook of modern science, and he succeeded in doing it. This very gathering is proof enough of what I am saying. He conceived the great idea that Hinduism, the Hindu faith as reinterpreted for him by his *Guru*, was not to be a cloistered and fugitive thing, but was to assert its existence in the face of science, that it was to prove itself real with the

¹ See p. 148, footnote.

full gaze and scrutiny of science playing on its countenance. It would be a most fascinating study to follow him in his wanderings over India, Europe and America, preaching and teaching and convincing, and helping everywhere to heal the schism of those days between faith and fact. I would venture to make one statement for your consideration. If you studied the matter a little closely, you would realize that the modern trend of thought in the domain of philosophy and no less of science, which would enthrone Intuition over the dismantled body of Reason owes its genesis to the seed of truth that was brought by Ramakrishna into life, and cast by Vivekananda over the face of the earth. We know the historical fact that it sprouted into exultant life from the hour of its sowing, and may I say that this Parliament of religions is a promising fruit on the vigorous sapling of world-thought into which it has already grown.

And what was the faith he went out to inculcate? Not any imperialistic doctrine about the exclusive superiority of Hinduism to other systems of religion, but the ancient faith of India, rescued from the debris of the Dark Ages by Paramhansa Deva, which promulgated the equal superiority of all religions, which held out the message to man that each system of religion, if conformed to by its adherent with the sincerity of his soul, opens the gateway to immortality, to the vision of the one Reality. And Vivekananda was able to convince his hearers over the three continents that he was not merely preaching some pious doctrine, but was giving out to them a fundamental truth capable of verification by every man, were he but seriously-minded about it, in the laboratory of his own soul. And none doubted the witness of himself and of his *Guru* on the point. I say, ladies and gentlemen, the spirit of Vivekananda holds the future of our race. Because of him—with his personality inextricably identified with that of his *Guru*—we have the vision growing clearer before us with the passing of each day of that shining table-land whereon the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Christian, the Moslem and the Zoroastrian shall kneel down together to worship the sun of identical truth. Is it not a vision that brings a greater zest to life, gives man a fresher will to live?

And just see how this Conqueror inevitably burst the shackles that had bound the Hindu of his days hand and foot. As men and women listened to him and were convinced by him, they necessarily became converted to his new evangel. And so for the first time in our history we began to have Hindus *by faith*, an impossible conception to the Hindu of pre-Vivekananda days. You know how the word 'Hindu' was limited throughout our long history to one born a Hindu. But this hero of Hindustan broke through that limitation with the ease and naturalness of one opening a flower, and his fellowmen knew that limitation no more when Vivekananda returned home with Nivedita and others who had become Hindus by faith. And let us also realize how that insensate pride of birth which had made the Brahman caste into a close corporation, and led its members to propound preposterous doctrines about their being the sole repositories of the Vedas and Vedānta, disappeared like mists before sunrise with the advent of Vivekananda. He, the elect of his Master, was non-Brahman, and as he went over the wide world preaching and promulgating his Master's philosophy and faith, he silenced the Brahman monopolist of God-knowledge for ever. The latter found his tongue cleaving to the roof of his mouth, for even he could not deny authority to one who had been elected to his mission by none other than the Saint of Dakshineswar. With Vivekananda we have the inauguration of a new order of Brahmans in India, based on desert, instead of on descent. And he slew with his own hand the monster he had labelled 'Kitchen Hinduism'—the perverted religiosity that had made the Hindu identify his faith with the question of who cooked his food, where it was cooked, what was cooked, and who served it. He, the Hindu of Hindus, was eating food cooked by non-Hindus and served by non-Hindus in alien lands, and of a kind the very thought of which would turn the champions of orthodoxy sick. The whole superstructure of nonsensicality practised in the name of religion collapsed and disappeared after that. And the condemnation of "crossing the sea" ceased to be heard after he had crossed over. Modern India was emerging into visibility as a luminous emanation from his personality.

I beg permission to point out one or two other aspects of the renewal wrought by Vivekananda in our life. The women of India, barring the isolated few in the Brahmo Samaj, got their first real chance of coming out of darkness into light when Nivedita stepped into their midst. By precept and example, illumined by her idealism, she inducted the women of India into the freedom which was theirs by birth-right, and also their heritage from the ancient civilization of their motherland. And let us keep our remembrance ever fresh of the outshining achievement of our hero in modern India—his identification of *Karma-Yoga* with service of fellow man. The Ramakrishna Mission which is the visible embodiment of that identification has already saved India from the philistinism of orthodoxy, and put her on the road, on the pilgrimage, to the realization of her self, of all that she was and yet shall be—the recovery by her in the first place of her vision of the soul, and the revelation of it by her in the next place to humanity as a whole. This, as far as I can grasp it, is the mission of quest and conquest that has been handed to his followers by Vivekananda, the conqueror.

SYNTHESIS OF RELIGIONS IN RAMAKRISHNA

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It is almost a truism to say that, when two or more individuals meet for the first time they primarily fix on the differences that separate them. That there is an identity binding them together is brought out later by repeated or continuous contact. But even in such circumstances more often than not the deepest unity that lies hidden in the differences is not revealed from the first, and people in general rest content only with a somewhat unconscious approach towards it. In our ordinary dealings, however, it is not of immediate importance whether we probe into the fundamental unity, or we concentrate on its outward indications, that is, the surface resemblances, for similarity of some sort alone is capable of providing a basis for association. This is as much true of the

individuals at a developed stage of social life as of the primitive men who were not as a matter of fact born to a pre-existing social life. So the initial opposition induced by differences can be and is in point of fact sought to be overcome by a process of assimilation through recognition of resemblances. All these can well be summed up from the sociological point of view under the concept of the "Consciousness of Kind." Originally of course, the sense of kinship was all vague, and we cannot definitely say that it was anything more than the awareness of something common in the modes of life, in the matter of food and drink, the quest after them and so on. But this much is certain that the sense of a kindred nature, even in its nascent form, was the foundation upon which the most rudimentary form of social life which was mainly a physical aggregation was based.

Out of this beginning, small as it may seem, human association has worked wonders, and it is for the historians and the anthropologists to say how vast and variegated is the field covered by its past acquisitions, and for the scientific sociologists to indicate how complex and subtle is the machinery of society as it stands today in every country. We can, however, envisage this much that in the social evolution the primal inchoate awareness of kinship has been increasingly deepened, and is still in the process of being quickened. But it is far from true to say that, in our social life, however perfect, we have grasped the unity in its fundamental aspect; for, social life consists in acting in conformity with the laws and customs which are binding upon all and as such functions on the presupposition of a unity as the ground, and, what is more, so far as the workings in society are concerned, this unity in its ultimate nature is always in the background. It will, on the contrary, necessitate a laborious search by way of a distinct study of the relevant empirical facts and their implications to bring it before us. But the difficulty is that we cannot in that way end up better than by erecting an ideal. And this clearly shows that the humanity in its working through social organization is still running after an ideal which *ipso facto* appears as a will-o'-the-wisp. All this, however, matters little in so far as the work-a-day life of the individual is concerned inasmuch as he is more interested

in the-established forms of conduct than any theory about it. Yet there is no gainsaying the fact that in his activities, he unwittingly subscribes to the position that, but for a fundamental unity or identity which in the guise of a surface-resemblance attracted the primitive men to form into groups and is still inviting the social beings to reach out to it through empirical codifications, no social structure worth the name, and, for that matter, no flowering forth of individuality or personality would have been possible.

If we leave our consideration of social groups, the ground upon which they are based and the ideal that draws individuals to unity, and turn to the conditions in which the world exists at the present time, a problem will forthwith force itself on our attention, and we shall be surprised by the similarity of the relations that exist between the modern nations and those which existed between the primitive individuals. That is to say, the different nations of the world are very much in the state of strife the pre-social men found themselves in previous to any association. We may allow for the fact that it was originally a natural calamity or calamities that thrust the primitive men together, or for the contention that the original urge towards association was all economic. But in either case, an awareness of identity, however hazy, was the presupposition ; otherwise we shall be at a loss to understand why the primitive human beings preferred association among themselves to any possible alliance with the lower animals. In a way, the primitives were at an advantage, because they were still children of nature with apprehension and immediacy as the chief instrument of their naive approach to one another. So what is immensely difficult for modern men to achieve was all very easy for our remote ancestors. Nowadays each country or rather each nation, with its geographical limitations, its resources, a culture and an ideal, moral, political or otherwise, has developed an individuality which is much more real than that of any of the individuals who were the first to tread this earth of ours. It is then no wonder that the contact between the nations has been marked by a keen contest and fierce competition.

It is almost a commonplace of history that it was greed for wealth that brought the Westerners to the forums of the Eastern

countries, and we can safely say that as in the ancient times as well as in the middle ages the cultural ideas of the Orient travelled westward on the shoulders of invaders, soldiers and traders who for their part reciprocated on behalf of their countries by unloading some of their own into those they traversed, so on the threshold of modern age, the contact between the nations was effected for the most part by traders and travellers and for that reason it was far from being close and complete.

The advent of science opened up a new vista before mankind ; scientific inventions have gone a long way to save our physical labour as well as to reduce to the minimum the distance that separates one country from another: the easy modes of transit by land, sea and air are bringing them into an increasingly closer contact than ever. None can now miss the fact that the contact is taking place in a multitude of ways. There is undoubtedly a good deal of difference between the meeting of the primitive men and that of the modern nations, for in the case of the latter, the physical contact happens only through some individuals. It is none the less effective inasmuch as the individuals concerned are as a matter of fact taken as representatives of their countrymen, and it is here that there is a grave danger. As it is not possible in our ordinary life to eliminate altogether the personal elements from our perspective, the predispositions and prejudices, characteristic of an individual's nationality will creep in and colour his whole point of view, and will consequently tend to make the differences given at first view more pronounced than ever before.

So it is no exaggeration to say that the nations of the world have come to find themselves in very much the same conditions as confronted the primitive men previous to the first association. The problem that faces us all is: how to build a confederation out of the jarring units. The problem by itself provides a theme that demands separate treatment. The least that we can say on the point is this—that it is up to the nations to emerge out of the welter of confusion into which they have fallen in a manner that will be in keeping with their cultural heritage ; they must not proceed like their remotest progenitors, for they will thereby give the lie to all that is best in their much-vaunted civilization. We

shall do well in this connection to note some of the ways in which humanity as a unity is working and preparing the way for the much-needed unification.

Internationalism is the most obvious sign of that working. But it may be pointed out that all talk of internationalism is a meaningless fuss and that the sooner we give it up all the better for the world at large. Indeed in many countries cosmopolitans and pacifists are viewed as visionaries and treated as traitors. We are however not to go far afield to collect data to show that things all over the world have come to such a pass that in spite of ourselves a form of internationalism is already on us, and that a nation in modern times can ill afford to be wholly indifferent to the happenings in another. But the interrelation has so far been manifest more at the level of trade and commerce than at any others. Moreover, this interrelation, falling far short of internationalism proper, has given an occasion to the interested nations to get involved in internecine wars. And the political feuds that are raging all over Europe and in a remote corner of Asia are in reality the working of the insatiable desire for possession and power.

Of recent years much has been heard of collective security. But it appears to be more or less a catchword. In fact all this is worse than useless, for the modern mind is not yet equipped to accept it in its proper connotation. So it is idle to talk of collective security unless and until the world is cured of the "collective insanity" which is on it. In peace time it is very easy to wax eloquent over it under the bracing climate of Geneva. But recently the Abyssinian crisis has proved to the hilt that all tall talk of collective security is a bunkum, and the league of nations a fiasco, politicians have recourse to treaties and regional pacts which are for all practical purposes alliances which can be broken at a moment's notice or without any notice whatsoever. Alignment of policies is at present the watchword. But there is a wide gulf between alignment and unification, nay, alignment is worse than mere difference, for it is verily enforced by antagonism and is calculated to encounter opposition. In the political sphere—this is the only sphere that counts with the

public—the maxim that is universally valid is “might is right” and hence the superiority of a nation is sought to be measured by the quality and quantity of arms and ammunitions. And it is this alone that answers why the nations are now in a race for rearmament. A clash seems to be inevitable ; perhaps it has already begun. There is, however, no need for alarm to those who can look deep into the affairs of the world ; for, opposition or strife is one of the ways in which Nature has been working out her plan. So the present-day bickerings the world over are only a forecast of the calamity that is coming down upon us. It is only in pitch darkness that we realize the value of light, we can best know the bliss of peace when enveloped by gun-fire. Machine-guns, bombers, poison gas and all that have been invented under the silent prompting of nature, so that through their action we may effectively think out the means of living in happiness and peace on earth. Another Armageddon is getting ready, and the time is not distant when the arrogant dictators would be driven to the utmost limit of their resources, physical vigour and mental energy because of their wrangling and destructive warfare, and it is then and then only that the militarists would come to know of their malady and piteously cry for a remedy. But when will they find it? Who are they that will rush to their aid?

But the whole suggestion may be ridiculed and discarded as a pious wish of the weak. Indeed no wonder that it should be regarded so, for it is very hard to penetrate into the force that is driving the militarist nations one against another or some against all the rest.

The contact of the races has so far been considered only at the physical level. There has, however, been another kind of contact, namely, the contact of cultures—primarily that of the scientific cultures of the West and the spiritual culture of the East, especially of India, and this is more or less consequent upon the first. But the redeeming feature of the situation is that some intellectuals scattered all over the world are collaborating in the magnificent work of bringing to light the common elements binding the differences of the seemingly antagonistic cultures and

the idealists aspire. There have consequently sprung up many comparative studies in the field of intellectual research. Of all these the most important is comparative religion for it is only through religious aspirations and spiritual experiences that the highest attainment of a race is revealed, and, for that matter, it is in the religious lores and spiritual literatures that the most precious wealth of a nation is preserved. Naturally we can expect much in the way of mutual understanding and fellowship from comparative studies of the existing religions. But here too the danger of opposition and antipathy is very great, for everyone will be eager to extol the religion he professes and try to establish the superiority of his own over all the rest by a comparison. So after a study of the religions, a Christian may see more clearly than before why he is a Christian, a Hindu may find the reason why he should reject all other schisms and a Mussulman may glory in the unity of his Godhead and universal brotherhood, which may be regarded as an implication of the superiority of his religion, at the expense of any other religion. All this, however, is due to the play of prejudice ; even eminent philosophers in spite of their extraordinary intellectual penetration are found to suffer from such infirmity. Comparative studies, however, are not on that account all useless. Though in many cases they end in reiterating the differences of the religions which are in point of fact the starting ground, yet they gather together a mass of materials a proper manipulation of which might yield a far better result. But every one is not fit for this arduous task that requires a really generous mind and a cosmopolitan outlook. There are undoubtedly at least some who in their studies have succeeded in picking out the pithy utterances of the religious leaders who had come and gone, and in getting at the core of the mystic experiences that are enshrined in the religious lores of the different peoples, and have also pointed out that the difference that we meet with in the religions is mainly due to the difference in circumstances, environments, technique of presentation and expression. This is indeed a synthesis of a sort which is attained through the instrumentality of intellect. It will presumably afford ample satisfaction to the individual concerned, and is calculated to induce a conciliatory attitude in many others. . But it can hardly eliminate the risk of

its being assailed by an analysis that would run counter to its trend. Not only this, the procedure seems to make much of the common elements, so much so as to ignore the features of the religions as distinctive discipline. Sifting out a selfsame doctrinal content out of the religions will, of course, serve to allay a good deal the suspicion and superciliousness that are consuming their votaries. But with that alone one cannot put up a fight against the forces that are working in opposition to religion and on that score to the religions. So even admitting that religion as such is an institution which humanity cannot dispense with, one may not find anything in the documentary evidence to bind him down to the position that each of the existing religions has fulfilled the purpose that is manifested in man's religious aspirations, or that each has a promise of the fulfilment in virtue of the potency of the symbols that have hitherto been put into practice and of the technique the value of which has already been assessed by long tried out experiments. What is all a matter of life in its deeper aspect and is to be mastered through practice can in no way be wholly amenable to a rigid interpretation of reason.

Hence synthesis proper is to be sought only in one's spiritual experience. But the difficulty is here still greater despite the fact that it will take one deeper towards the root of the matter. When one reaches in one's way the peak position in spiritual experience, one will not presumably perceive from one's height the differences left behind. Besides, one may be too much absorbed in the ecstasy of one's experience to refer back to any other religious ideal except one's own. Or if anybody at all take care to view other religions, all that he may allow will be a concession to those who profess them, in the sense that all the practices resorted to and all the names and attributes that are formulated to conceptually grasp the being and nature of the supreme Reality which as the ground and goal gives meaning to religion, are, after all, different approaches to the fulfilment of the ideal and the form of his chosen Godhead under which he himself has realized the truth of his religion. And this can be read as a sort of subsumption. But, truly speaking, there may be little recognition of the autonomy of each of the other religions in respect of its ideal and

practice or practices, except in the superficial differences in the elements of languages they respectively indulge in for expression.

It may, however, be contended that spiritual experience may be attained by following strictly a particular discipline, the height of the attainment may nevertheless be a meeting place of many paths.

This is perhaps true and in a way it should be so from the nature of the case. But this is not equivalent to saying that the meeting of many paths is itself a content of the experience of the *sādhaka* at the suggested height. An imaginative analysis of the position to which mystics soar up may afford us an alternative to what is insisted on. If one is already in mystic ecstasy through which alone, as we are told, the ultimate union with God or Reality is achieved, one being identical with it in the final realization, would naturally be raised to a sphere of supreme bliss, so that there should hardly be any need for distinguishing between the different paths the genuine mystics have hitherto traversed, for there is presumably nothing to be distinguished and none to distinguish inasmuch as the mystics attained that only after they had taken their feet off the path they had trodden and their hands off crutches they leaned on. *A fortiori* the sphere of supreme bliss is a sphere all apart and any *a priori* deduction of a path that led or may lead on to it is no more possible than that of a pen from Hegel's Absolute.

In the teachings and life of the sage of Dakshineswar, however, we come on a unique thing which is scarcely to be found in the annals of the world. There is no denying that we have on record the life-history of many mystics who after their ascent descended to bestow upon mankind their blessings. But in Ramakrishna we find a good deal more. He not only began from the bottom rung of a ladder of a religious discipline and reached the highest and came down to men to tell them of his experiences through symbols and parables that embody imagery and imaginative flight that could bring all glory to a poet of the rank of Rabindranath; he took upon himself the hazardous task of experimenting with the ideal and practices of the chief religions of the world, namely, Islam, Christianity and also of some cults of the

Hindu religion, under the guidance of *gurus* representing the different paths.

It is, of course, quite natural to regard all this as an idle curiosity. But we shall not do well to forget that Ramakrishna had already reached that stage when he could realize the truth of the saying of Śrī Kṛishṇa: *Yam labdhvā chāparam lābham manyante nādhikam tataḥ*. And perhaps we are not in a position to realize the tremendous sacrifice he had to make in order to try the experiments ; he was in possession of the highest bliss a man can ever aspire to and he in fact came out of it for a time and descended to a lower level or even to the lowest of religious discipline, namely, the worship through symbols with its necessary accompaniments. All these he did perhaps because of the fact that he envisaged in advance an era of civilization which is yet to be ushered in, and in all probability in view of that sought to remove the major impediments that stand in its way. But such an interpretation of Ramakrishna's motive may not commend itself to many. Anyway, none can miss the fact that it was his love for humanity that urged him to undergo such nerve-racking trials. The quickness with which the plenitude of the fulfilment in his experience of the respective ideals of the religions adopted for experimentation, was attained, showed beyond a shred of doubt that his was a colossal spiritual capacity.

One should not be quick in one's attempt to construe Ramakrishna's experiences and teachings regarding the religions as a sort of comparative religion. We have beforehand tried to indicate that comparative religion is at its best only an attempt through intellect to understand the structural affinity between their ground and goal. But that cannot in any way generate the experience upon which they are based, or to which they lead. From the point of view of an attempted intellectual synthesis, whether this or that religion with its peculiar technique can lead to the realization of the cherished ideal is still an open question which can hardly be answered by an intellectual. Ramakrishna, however, not only spotted the pearl, but also dived deep and emerged with the prized possession. There was evidently no theorizing, but an actual act—a spiritual experience somewhat like

a sea the depth of which we can know only by going into it, and which as such is a pointer to others who are striving along the path, that is to say, Ramakrishna showed, by his experiments and by making many others experience, that the forms under which God is sought to be reached in the religions are capable of being realized through *sādhana*, and that they are no fabrications, dreams or hallucinations that are susceptible of any psychotherapeutic interpretation, for that realization brings a fundamental change over the whole structure of the physico-vital mental being of the individual concerned and fills him with a sense of consecration that culminates in the long run in an acme of ecstasy.

Nowadays there is manifestly a tendency to make much of the word 'synthesis.' It is in fact found on everybody's lips. But oftentimes there is a confusion between synthesis proper and eclecticism. If a temple is erected in the name of Ramakrishna, for instance, and is constructed in such a way as to hold within its structure the fundamental features of mosque, church, synagogue, and so forth, one may naturally go away with the idea that synthesis is not anything more than putting some things together which are apparently taken to antagonize one another. But if we pause and ponder a while, we may gain insight into something deeper. We are very apt to take very lightly Ramakrishna's parable of the tank with its different ghats, and we may not hesitate to complain that it does not in fact afford a revelation save and except what is nothing more than a truism, namely, that the different religions are different paths to God. We should not, however, forget that a truth is found to be a truism only after its discovery. As a rule we fix on our wisdom and do not so much take into consideration the conditions that combine to put us wise. It is therefore quite natural on our part to concentrate on one half of the entire truth the parable is contrived to convey. It is undoubtedly true that the difference of the religions is not in any way minimized. It is, on the contrary, emphasized by the very fact of synthesis, for were there no opposition any conciliation would be out of the question. The point that we should take note of is this that the difference need not necessarily clash, and that the opposition that is met with in

the case of the religions is more a matter of abstraction than of fact. Ramakrishna pointed out that the cause for any conflict between the religions proceeds purely from imagination and that if we view the thing in its true perspective, all contention will cease. He sums up all that he has to say regarding synthesis of religions in a pithy sentence: "All the religions are different paths to God"; the ghats, though different lead to the same Ganges and the water drawn through them is the same in spite of the difference of the vessels in which it is contained and in spite of the various names by which it is called. So also in regard to the religions, though they differ in conceptions, ideas, ideals and their methods of procedure, this their difference should not be construed as a case of antagonism. Truly speaking, all opposition is an offshoot of imperialism which in its turn proceeds from an artificiality, namely, the claim of a particular religion to be the world religion.

To use Ramakrishna's phraseology, plants can grow out of paddy, but never out of rice. The doctrinal content of a religion by itself will lead nowhere, and we may find that the religious teachers of the world are at one in so far as the conception of the Deity is concerned. But it will not do to ignore the difference in the methods proposed wherewith to work it out in practice. That difference is verily the fact which is to be reckoned within our consideration of the religions. And if there is to be a synthesis, it will be by annulling opposition and that only in the light of the ultimate goal—union with God, which is attainable by the various religious disciplines. We are asked to recognize both unity and difference at once, unity of end, but difference of approaches.

There is, however, another aspect of the situation that is very beautifully brought out by Ramakrishna. He has shown that in our quest after truth, all that matters is the urge and aspiration of our inner being, and not so much any creeds or tenets. All the paraphernalia of a religious discipline will prove futile but for what is in reality the vitalizing force in *sādhana*. The practices will prove abortive in default of a dash to achieve the end. When we are all eager to reach the destination, we need not worry

much about the means of transport, for it is all a question of suitability, the majority of men walk on foot, but only a few can stand a flight by air. The world situation would have been simplified a good deal, if the teeming millions were of like mind and like temperament. But the fact points to the contrary. Differences in nature are found to count much in many spheres of life, and it is no wonder that in religious life too individual temperament and topographical conditions are turned to account. So one particular religion cannot be regarded as absolute. On the contrary, the religions have been the landmarks of civilization, and the religion of a race points to the level of culture it has attained. So to attribute to one particular religion all civilizing value is to indulge in egotism and arrogance. Ramakrishna by his master experience demonstrated all these in a far more effective way than anyone else.

It may however be contended that we are making the most of Ramakrishna and his message, and may be told that the saying, 'Truth is One' and all that is as ancient as the hills. It is indeed a commonplace of culture that the Vedic sages sang of the One in the words, "*Ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti*," i.e. "Truth is one, sages call it by various names." Of course, in the world where there is a race after novelty in almost every sphere the presentation of this point of view will have its natural effect and one may find to one's relief that all that Ramakrishna revealed is a truth the world already possessed and that the best that can be got out of him is only a reinforcement to religion and for that matter to the religions. It is perhaps fairly correct to say that to the Vedic sages the problem, if there was a problem at all, was not regarding any possible reconciliation of some contending religions and on that account several religious disciplines. Most probably nomenclature was a source of some trouble. It is quite easy to understand that the expressions of the unity of the highest spiritual experience, by different individuals in different ways—symbols, similes and metaphors—will contain the impress of their respective personalities. So all that the Vedic sages emphasized was the unity of their experience of the Supreme against the difference in the modes and mediums of expression.

We should not, however, forget that Ramakrishna with the help of his *guru* Totapuri attained to the state of beatitude at which he realized the absolute unity and comprehensiveness of being—a stage of spiritual perfection which is presumably the highest. But as we have already pointed out, the synthesis of all possible points of view is involved in such experience as an implication and that is sufficient for the individual concerned. The present-day world finds itself in far more complex condition than those in which the Vedic sages found the valley of the Indus. In modern times three or more developed religions and the corresponding cultures came to clash with one another. Besides, there was much wrangling over the cults even within the same religious fold. Hence Ramakrishna's message had to be worked out in following in detail the prominent arduous religious disciplines and in experiencing in his being their fulfilment. He in fact did not lack anything that could possibly induce him to suffer so much. I must say even at the cost of repetition that it was only for the sake of humanity that he suffered a "sea of anguish." He took up one discipline after another and the manner in which he realized the cherished ideals of the religions showed that a cosmic plan was being revealed through him, for his whole life has been unfolded as an open justification of the best that has hitherto been attained by mankind, that is to say, in these days of hectic excitement and heresy his life stands out not only as an inspiring example to the aspirants but also and to a larger extent as an argument with infinitely greater force than all those devised by human speculation can command, for the spirituality of the universe as well as for the truth of spiritual experiences. He not only realized in his own being, but also imparted his realization direct to his disciples, and we are fortunate that some of those who lived, moved and had their being with him are still with us. If we have still any doubt as to this illustrious personality, we have just the chance of removing it by getting into touch with them. Anyway, if we take into consideration the full facts of Ramakrishna's life and the experiments he made, we shall have reason enough to say that he came not only to put the old wine into a new bottle but more truly to show that the old bottles are all

filled to the brim and that whether to take this or that bottle is all a matter of choice and that the elixir contained therein is equally serene and when drunk whatever the bottle equally affords peace. So the statement that Ramakrishna is simply a reiteration of the age-old truth, smacks, I should say, of an anachronism.

The whole matter may, however, be viewed from another angle. It may be asked: granted that a synthesis is effected what does it avail? Without going deep into the matter, we may say that the query itself proceeds out of a prejudice. In this day, politics is evidently the major interests of the educated and the politicians their real leaders, political integrity and independence is the main consideration in the matter of a nation's prestige. So it is no wonder that the words of Ramakrishna—belonging as he does to an unfortunate nation politically as well as economically—may fail at the moment to impress the collective mind of the East as well as of the West which is at the present time too much overwhelmed either by the sweetness or the hideousness of the song of the machine-gun to lend ear to one who speaks from a sphere that is very near to man's heart. It is indeed true that the leaders all over the world are too preoccupied to pay heed to one who came to save mankind. His divine mission will none the less work its way however much we may try to whittle it down, for Truth is eternal and it must prevail.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AS THE PROPHET OF THE CHURCH INVISIBLE

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I hope my audience will bear with me if I begin with an account of my first awakening to the reality of the Church Invisible as I stepped inside a visible Church on a ceremonial occasion. It is the Ethical Church at Bayswater in London to which I was introduced by an English friend, who is at the moment out in Spain for repatriation of the British refugees in that

unhappy land. It was the 3rd of July, 1927, when the Church was celebrating the thirty-fifth anniversary of its foundation with a special memorial service, followed by the unveiling of a painted window dedicated to the memory of Elizabeth Fry, the Norfolk philanthropist of English Prisons Reform fame. What made a tremendous impression on my mind—and my memory still loves to linger on that first impression—is the unexpected sight of the full-sized statue of Jesus Christ installed on one side of the pulpit and that of Lord Buddha on the other. This came as an agreeable surprise upon me, and that for reasons which I need not recount here. Anyway I kept for some time, straining my eyes in order to make sure that, in the dim religious light of that sanctuary, I had not fallen an easy victim to a fond delusion. On being reassured that my eyes had not played me false, I realized in a moment of inspiration, as it were, that the scene, which I had at first taken to be one too good to be true, may quite conceivably, in that context at least, be one too good *not* to be true. Indeed, the whole atmosphere of the place, along with its entire appurtenance, both realistic and symbolic, impressed upon me, with a peculiar persuasiveness, the truth that there can be no 'peace on earth and goodwill towards men' until we shall have discerned in all visible Churches the progressive revelation of the Church Invisible as the sponsor of that human unity or solidarity which veritably is, here and now, and not merely something ever more about to be. What with the rich symbolism of Walter Crane's painting of "The Torch-bearers" in adaptation of the two well-known lines of Charles Kingsley:

" Still the race of hero-spirits
Pass the torch from hand to hand;"

what with the inscription, on the upper part of the large pulpit, of Wordsworth's famous line:

" Thanks to the human heart by which we live ;"

and what with the marble altar, in the centre, bearing the inscription on its four sides:

" An altar to the Ideal: The True: The Beautiful:
The Good ";—

there had been created just that spiritual *milieu* which furnished the best commentary upon the text of a world-wide ethical fellowship of the human race. From this pulpit of the Ethical Church, sanctified by the visible representation of two of the noblest samples of humanity—of Jesus the Christ and Gautama the Buddha—I had the inestimable privilege of addressing the congregation at a Sunday morning service in January, 1928 on this very theme of 'The Church Invisible.' As I observed in the concluding portion of that address, and as I do believe even now, it is this conception of the Church Invisible that alone can guarantee the realization of the cult of Internationalism, the path to which lies not along the road of nationalism or insular existence. We are often reminded that the civilization of today is national in its roots, but international in outlook—very much like the tree that has its roots struck deep down into the soil, while its branches spread out far and wide into the sky above. But mischief, alas, always lies about the root! Nor is the root a faithful index of the thing in question. "By their fruits ye shall know," and not by their *roots*. When all is said and done, we have got to remember that a Parliament of Man or a Federation of Cultures must remain only an idle dream of the Futurist, until and unless the making of the international mind is an accomplished fact; and this can only come about under the perpetual inspiration and watchful care of a Church Invisible. On no other condition can the East and the West meet to their reciprocal advantage in the thought-exchange of the world. In the geographical dispensation of the League of Nations the East may be a negligible partner, but not so, as we venture to think, in the federation of Cultures, the realm of Spiritual Values. According to the economics of spiritual life of the world, there can be no senseless duplication of functions. It is, because, and so far, East is East and West is West, that the twain can, and must meet, as they have evidently done in their common allegiance to this prophet of the Church Invisible, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

In literalness of fact Ramakrishna was the visible embodiment of the Church Invisible,—translating into actuality through his

life-long thought and conduct, the ideal enlivening it. His famous dictum—"as many minds, so many pathways to God"—has proved, as it is destined to prove for all times to come, the very *Magna Charta* of religious catholicism, emancipating us from religious bigotry and intolerance. The outward simplicity of the oft-quoted dictum belies its profundity in respect of its spiritual value. It clearly enshrines, on the one hand, a belief in the infinite and unique worth of the Individual in matters pertaining to the Spirit; and, on the other, it proves to demonstration that all revelation of God, which is the basic fact of Religion, is *ad modum recipientis*, proportionate to the receptive capacity of the worshipper. As an apostle of the Church Invisible he has given the redemptive warning that religion, in the name of loyalty to a visible church, borders on irreligion; that patriotism, local or communal, is not enough; and that the apotheosis of one's religion or church is the last idolatry of the devout soul. Against the incidence of a despotic absolutism of a particular creed or church, what Ramakrishna appealed to is the spirit of Absolutism itself which is pledged to Justice, in the name of whole, to each according to its special place and proper rank. Herein the saint of Dakshineswar strongly reminds one of the preacher of Galilee who drew men away from the worship of false gods with the perpetual reminder: "My kingdom is not of this world." But this is no mere negative prescript landing us in sheer emptiness. That negative direction has for its positive counterpart the life-giving message: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." That is why Harnack once said that "Christ could think of no higher task than to point men to Himself." But institutional Christianity has missed that point altogether inasmuch as we find Dean Inge protesting against "aberrations of institutionalism" and Dr. L. P. Jacks tracing the "lost radiance of Christianity" to that "institutional selfishness," which is the sworn of our spiritual life. May not this warning be lost upon those that profess to follow in the footsteps of the Paramahansa! Time and again his followers have been reminded by his renowned disciple, Vivekananda that the Master came to the world not to add one more sect or cult to the already existing sect-and-cult-ridden

world of ours, but to rally the scattered forces of Religion in the name of the Most High, the Nameless and the Ineffable.

To the distracted world of today the saintly Ramakrishna has one gospel to preach—the gospel, namely, of redemption from the tyranny of traditions and institutions, of castes and creeds, of ceremonials and shibboleths, the tyranny, in short, of all exclusive cults of worship that have rent asunder, in the name of religion, sects, communities and races of the world from one another. When Religion, the only Power on earth that makes for unity, cohesion and brotherliness among the people, is switched off into questionable channels of religious exclusiveness and intolerance, it behoves one to exclaim, as Whitehead has done in his *Lowell Lectures* that “religion is the last refuge of human savagery.” A severe indictment of religion, indeed, and an incontrovertible one as well! But I would endorse the verdict with the qualification that the singular use of Religion be replaced by the plural. Religions have been tried and found wanting but Religion still goes strong. Religion is, confessedly, of tribal origin; but it is, in the end, what we make of it—a synonym for world-loyalty. Comparative Religion or the Soviet abolition of Religion will be a sad cure of this “savagery” of religions. As one of its devoted students remarked at a meeting of Fellowship of Faiths in the Holborn Church, the study of Comparative Religion has left me only comparatively religious. For, the search after the lowest common multiple of the religions ends in the reduction of Religion to its lowest terms and dilution of it to the vanishing point of religious indifferentism. Religion, today, stands on an inclined plane. It is difficult to follow the upward path and rehabilitate Religion, divested of that “institutional selfishness” which entails this savagery. But it is so easy to follow the downward track into the pitfall of nihilism. This summary treatment of Religion is being eagerly sought in certain enlightened quarters. It is only the other day that our young hopefuls met at the Calcutta University Institute and pronounced the verdict that religiosity of the Indian mind has hitherto obstructed India’s progress, and as such it is to be given a month’s notice as being an undesirable tenant in the University area.

Probably it will be said that one swallow does not make the summer; but the appearance of the swallow on the horizon certainly indicates which way the wind blows!

The constructive problem that stares us in the face today—this Parliament of Religions in particular—is the evolution of a new scale of values, a new method of valuation. The worth of a religion is not to be measured by the counting of heads which often leads, as we have known to our cost, to the breaking of heads. “There can be,” said Cardinal Newman, “no common measure of agreement, when there is no common measure of minds.” The *raison d’être* of this Parliament is to devise that greatest common measure of agreement on which alone depends the salvation of the human race. When, however, a devotee like Ramakrishna is sent out to the world for the salvage of our religious beliefs it is a clear indication that God does not despair of man. What is most appropriate, therefore, to the needs of the occasion is the prayer of Browning the poet-philosopher:

“Make no more giants, God, but elevate the race at once.”

RAMAKRISHNA IN CONTINENTAL EUROPE

JEAN HERBERT

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As we know, Vivekananda himself brought the message of Ramakrishna to Europe, and especially to France. He even took the trouble to learn the French language to be able to speak at a Parliament of Religions in Paris. And Dr. Boshi Sen¹ recently discovered an autograph letter which the Swami wrote in French.

Sister Nivedita wrote several books in English which obtained a wide circulation and helped to introduce the teaching in Anglo-Saxon countries.

Many of the most distinguished indologists in Europe, Sylvain Levi in France, Max Müller in England, etc. showed great interest and wrote and spoke on the teaching.

¹ An admirer of the Swami. See page 12.—ED.

But the teachings of Ramakrishna as expounded by Vivekananda, did not spread at that time outside a very small circle in Continental Europe.

It was Romain Rolland, my great fellow countryman, one of the most generous hearts which the West has known, who really started to spread the message of the saint of Dakshineswar.

The volumes which Romain Rolland devoted to Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda met with tremendous success and were translated into many languages.

I was privileged to see and read the many enthusiastic letters which Romain Rolland received from all parts of the world after he had published those books.

The interest created is evidenced by the fact that a great demand has now been created for the actual teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Extensive translations are now being made and published in French, German, Greek, Swedish, etc.

An indication of the interest aroused may be gathered from the fact that the French translation alone has been reviewed at great length throughout Europe, from Portugal to Poland and from Belgium to Greece.

The universality of the appeal may be seen from the fact that the author¹ of the French translation has received enthusiastic encouragements from famous Protestant clergymen, from Roman Catholic monasteries, from important Jewish rabbis, from Theosophical Societies, Masonic Lodges, Buddhist Societies, Societies for psychic research, and principals of University faculties.

We have felt the need of publishing cheap translations of a part of the lectures of Vivekananda whose appeal is largely to the educated people, and the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, with no Indian scientific-looking words, which could cater to the wants of peasants, workmen, mountaineers, etc. And I have only just heard that the agent for distribution in France, who could only with difficulty be prevailed upon to accept 100 copies a few months

¹ The speaker himself.—ED.

ago, now wants a first consignment of 1,000 copies of every book that comes out.

The Ramakrishna Mission has made the great sacrifice of sparing one of its most distinguished monks for England, and another who has been working in Continental Europe for three years, commanding respect and admiration from everybody. And his success has been such that I have come here with a message to the Mission that we need more of their men.¹

RAMAKRISHNA AND THE ONLY ROAD TO PEACE

PRESIDENT LIM BOON KENG

Amoy University, Amoy, Fukien, China

The world as we see it with all the available means at our disposal is simply a vast arena of conflict and strife, with the inexorable law of evolution prevailing everywhere. Throughout nature there is an endless struggle evidently towards some definite end. Hence from the earliest times of human existence, some sort of religion has exercised great influence upon the conduct of individuals and society. The aim of every religion is to create faith in some spiritual power, the recognition of which enables human beings to restrain themselves, and to live in a righteous way, so that the greatest good may be the result.

Of course it was inevitable that savages should have very crude ideas of natural forces, and should attribute their activities to the action of spirits. With the progress of civilization, the priests and tribal leaders elaborated the dogmas of their religion, and created the rites and ceremonies for the worship of these invisible beings. On this account, religion has been the almost indispensable bond that has been the means of enabling large communities to live together peacefully. Since the masses have been taught to believe in the mysterious power of the spirits in

¹ A monk of the Mission was deputed for Vedānta work in France, a few weeks after the Parliament.—ED.

helping to shape the Destiny of mankind, so the main object of nearly every religion is to enable the human individual to get the greatest happiness.

II

Unfortunately, however, the priests and leaders of every religious sect have been more or less at loggerheads with one another for one reason or another. The causes of such misunderstanding have been very numerous, but as a rule, they have little reference to the fundamental aim of the religions concerned. Thus for example, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and the Chinese cult of Humanism, often misnamed Confucianism, all aim to urge man to be good, and to attain happiness through the practice of virtue. All these religions do emphasize the supremacy of the Divine Law of the Supreme Deity, or God, sincere belief in whose authority, is the best means of enabling man to live righteously. The moral maxims of every one of these religions are almost identical, as they have been formulated in the course of ages as the result of social experience. However each one of these religions has inherited vast traditions with all sorts of legendary accounts of antiquity, and of priestly dogmas.

The Jews could not be persuaded to depart from the traditional teaching of their Patriarchs and Prophets. The Christians of all sects have their own doctrines concerning the Incarnation of God in a human being, through whose crucifixion, salvation from the curse of the Almighty is to be obtained. The Mussulmans, on the contrary, will abide only by the revelations of their Prophet Mohammed, whose objection to the Trinitarian doctrine led to the emphasis on the oneness of God throughout the Koran. The Humanitarian cult of China since the days of Confucius, has strenuously advocated a sincere agnosticism towards the mystery of the spiritual world. In this world, the study of nature—it stresses—will reveal the determinism of cause and effect. Love must be the potent force to bind human society. It must be nurtured at home through the practice of Filial piety. The golden rule of Reciprocity can only be put into practice, when all men will be sincere.

In modern times, the spread of Science, and the marvellous achievements of scientific experts in all departments of research into the arena of nature, have enabled man to harness the forces of nature to facilitate the means of existence. The majority of the intelligentsia among scientists in all countries are probably agnostics, if not materialists or atheists. This fact must be frankly acknowledged. Scientists always recognize that they must tolerate the views of religious preachers, if peace is to be maintained. Until education has provided the means of teaching science adequately to the whole community, it is surely hopeless to expect that the general public in all countries can be expected to accept the interpretations of modern scientists with regard to the facts of nature. These modern views may be quite incompatible with the doctrines of the different religions, and unless the intelligentsia with a good knowledge of modern science, will tolerate the superstitions of the different sects existing now in every land, conflict and strife must be inevitable. The danger is that the believers in religious creeds may rise in opposition to the exposition of scientific views concerning the phenomena of life.

III

As the aim of every religion is to teach man to love his neighbour and the whole of the human race, it is quite indispensable that the preachers of all religions should inculcate true love as the basis of international goodwill. Unless the leaders of each community have a clear understanding of the foundations and aims of the important religions, they will tend to uphold only the doctrines in which they have been taught, and will be more or less antagonistic against the teaching of other sects. Differences of opinions must lead to conflicts, which may result in serious consequences. If each national group will stand for the religions of the country, to which they belong, in the long run, hatred and antagonism must arise to drive the opposing communities to war. The love of one's country is almost instinctive in the human race. That it is quite necessary to fight in defence of one's country is only a phase of Chauvinism. The Chinese people, who love Peace above themselves, will go to any length to prevent the eruption

of war. However, there is a limit with regard to every phenomenon. It is a human habit to magnify the mysterious forces that operate with due conspicuous features, that cannot escape the observation of everybody. The scientist can easily understand that there is a universal law of nature, by which everything in human society can be interpreted and explained. The evolution of the human race can account for all the differences in culture, religion and customs as well as for the various anthropological and ethnological characters, which so markedly distinguish one race from another. In the interest of civilization and world peace, the leaders of each nation should understand that it has always been a real menace to humanity to inculcate ideas of race superiority among the masses of any particular nation, for the result has always been the establishment of a mental attitude that is so irritable that it can be easily incited in the interests of Chauvinism. As a matter of fact, it is part of the primitive instinct of the race to entertain fear of every living thing in the environment. The duty of all religious leaders must be to inculcate the love of peace and to show the practical means of living up to this noble ideal.

Unfortunately in recent years, in some countries, undue advantage has been taken of this human susceptibility to train young people in defence of their country by inspiring them with fear and suspicion if not even hatred of other nations. That the government of any country should have control of education is a sound principle. However, the national leaders must not for selfish purposes, prejudice the mind of the youths in favour of any sect or political party. Educational institutions should have perfect liberty to teach science, philosophy and arts in such a manner as to reveal the value of Truth, and to inspire all with a faith in the excellence of Beauty and Goodness.

IV

The greatest hope of mankind is that the different religions will in the future utilize all the means at their disposal to impress upon the youths of all lands the fact that humanity, in reality, constitutes one family so that in course of time a real federation of all nations may be formed, with the sincere object of

establishing an intellectual bond that will result in a new world society with readiness to carry out the noble ideals, which all the great religions have been preaching for centuries. Then there will be some hope that the plans of Disarmament, which have been fostered by many politicians and statesmen, may be sincerely carried out. But until all the religious propagandists have put into practice what they have so loudly proclaimed, it is useless to hope that the general public can be expected to put altruism into practice.

V

In order that a successful league of nations may be formed to unite all races and nations in the work of establishing Love and Peace throughout the world, the following means of promoting goodwill must be emphasized and sincerely adopted in the everyday life of every community:

- (a) Perfect tolerance of all religious, scientific and political opinions ;
- (b) Sincerity in the search and exposition of Truth and Beauty ;
- (c) Benevolence towards all men irrespective of race, class or creed ;
- (d) Righteousness as the basis of conduct ;
- (e) Recognition of the interdependence of nations ;
- (f) Appreciation of the fact that Progress implies the need of change, which may even cause a revolution.

It is therefore very essential that there should be opportunities for members of all nations to meet in order to do the work in co-operation for the advancement of civilization. At the beginning, it is important to select such subjects as will cause the least friction. Therefore such subjects as aesthetics, music, science and athletics are least likely to arouse racial or religious prejudices that may result in serious conflicts. When the delegates of all the nations are accustomed to work in co-operation, mutual understanding will naturally result, and friendship is inevitable. When

so much has been done, it will be possible for the League to attempt the more serious investigations for the mitigation of social and political evils, which have been the main causes of human misery and suffering.

It may be taken for granted that when goodwill and friendship prevail among the leaders of all the nations, there will be no real difficulty in tackling the economic problems of capital and labour which must be solved if society is to be relieved of poverty and all its horrible consequences. The fact that slums exist even in the richest Christian countries, is an undeniable proof that the people have only paid lip service to the teaching of Jesus.

VI

The prevention of War is today the most important international question, which statesmen and religious teachers must try to understand. Without a thorough comprehension of the psychological background prevailing in each country, the members of any League for the prevention of War, will not be able to accomplish much. We have had too much protestation of the Love of Peace and Justice. What is urgently needed is that all nations will make Righteousness the basis of their ethical laws and will have the determination always to make no profit that will cause suffering to others.

The League of Nations should seriously undertake this work, with the co-operation of societies such as the Rotary International and other philanthropic associations, which are now to be found in every country.

VII

The aim of the Sri Ramakrishna cult is a very noble one to establish inter-racial amity, religious toleration—harmony of faiths, international co-operation through the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna that "Every faith is a path to God."

The Centenary Parliament of Religions will surely help to create better understanding between the different religious bodies

throughout the world. Let us sincerely hope that at this first Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Parliament will emerge that spiritual force, which will enable all the leaders of different religions to make the utmost sacrifices for the enlightenment of all nations so that they will henceforth value Truth above everything else, and thus be able to practise faithfully what they believe to be the good doctrines of their religious masters.

VIII

It must be of interest to the religious leaders of all nations that the Sri Ramakrishna religion is very similar to the ancient Chinese Religion of Humanism, which has been misnamed Confucianism by Christian missionaries. Confucius over two thousand five hundred years ago, refused to admit that he contributed anything to this great Religion and he emphasized that he was only a transmitter of the Gospel of Humanism. Today Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek of the Chinese Republic has started the New Life Movement, with a strenuous endeavour to put into practice the Tridemistic doctrines of the late Dr. Sun Yat Sen, who inculcates the urgent need of reviving the national culture on the principles of the national Religion of Humanism or Ju Tao.

IX

In the light of modern science through the marvellous revelations of Evolution as a cosmic force, this ancient Chinese religion will be acceptable to the intelligentsia of all countries. In essence it consists of three Fundamental Principles:—

1. Observe, study and obey the Law of Nature by the fullest investigation of all things ;
2. Extend love from the family to society, the country and all nations by the practice of Filial piety at home as the nucleus.
3. Make benevolence and righteousness the means of uniting all races and nations in one common fraternity to work for the good and happiness and peace of the whole world.

As regards the mysteries of the spiritual world, Confucius confessed his inability to talk on matters which he could not

examine in detail and he was perhaps the first Agnostic who advised his disciples not to be ashamed of admitting their lack of knowledge when asked about things of which they knew nothing. The Revival of this ancient Religion is the best evidence of the Reawakening of the oldest nation, which has preserved its civilization for over four thousand years. For centuries, China has always shown toleration of all religions. Today besides the native cults of Humanism and Taoism, the religions introduced from abroad such as Buddhism, Christianity and Islam have millions of adherents who work peacefully all over the country.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM

DR. GUALTHERUS H. MEES, M.A. (CANTAB.), LL.D. (LEYDEN)

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It is one of the supreme achievements of Sri Ramakrishna that he opened the eyes of the 19th and 20th century world to the deep significance of religious symbolism and that he demonstrated that symbols are not mere empty forms, but partake of divine life in all its fullness. Symbols, and in particular religious symbols, are not mere objective pictures, but are highly subjective, in that they form the most sacred and intimate part of our being. In them we live and move and have our being, and in truth they hold more reality—if I may use this expression—than we do ourselves in our surface consciousness.

When a new religion is born, that is, when a renewed impulse comes from the depths of the soul to the surface of mind, the divinity of form, the life in form and the significance of this life are again realized. And as a result, a revolution takes place in the mental and social life of the people.

When a religion is getting old and stale its forms lose their significance. They seem to have lost their life. Gods become mere images. Rituals become mere mechanical usage. Not only is the meaning lost, but the soul seems to have become dissociated and flown away. The life of the symbol has again

retired to the deepest recesses of mind, and becomes so secret that it is not even known to exist, and the form of the symbol has become commonplace.

When Sri Ramakrishna came on the religious stage in India, religion had become very much like that. The Mother Kālī had become a mere image to the greater part of the people, a form which was mechanically served or for the most a life that was not understood. The same as regards other deities. But the great Saint of Dakshinēswar could not be satisfied with mere lip-worship, with mere play with formula and ritual. His soul thirsted for realization. Was the Mother Kālī a reality, was She God indeed? Or was She a mere form-relic of the past without significance? Years passed in a most intensive striving for realization. The depth of desire for truth, the depths of suffering because of the lack of knowledge, we can hardly understand. Sri Ramakrishna was like a drowning man, to whom a breath of air is the one and only necessity. He was one of the few true *bhaktas*. Nārada says that true *bhakti* is the feeling of the deepest misery when God is temporarily lost. Ramakrishna had really known God from the very beginning, for if this had not been the case, he would not have been able to experience this infinitely deep suffering and longing for realization.

Everybody who is searching for something, knows what he is searching for, otherwise he would not search. Similarly every religious seeker really knows God, otherwise he would not trouble to seek God. But he desires to bring God near. From the distance of the objective he wants to bring Him to the nearness of the subjective. From the depths of the unconscious he wants to bring Him to the surface of the conscious. The door between the infinitely great world of the Unconscious and the little world of the conscious requires to be opened, so that at any time life may pass to and fro. When I use the word Unconscious I mean it in the sense of the latest school of psychology. It is everything which is not conscious in us at the moment and which is yet our psychological heritage. It is not quite correct to say it includes the superconscious as well as the subconscious, unless we remember that the superconscious may be conscious as well as unconscious.

Few people as yet realize the supreme significance of symbolism in their life. They do not realize that even the words we speak are symbols for inner states. Language is a process of symbolism. Certain simple symbols are easy to learn. That the word "hunger" for instance is a name or sound-symbol for an empty and craving state of the stomach, everybody will understand. But the symbols for spiritual hunger and spiritual appeasement are very difficult to understand. Man became what he is through language which enabled him to talk about his varied experiences with his fellows. But a great deal of misunderstanding in history and at the present day has arisen through language. I do not mean through ignorance of the various languages of the nations, but through lack of contact by means of the underlying and universal language of the collective symbols.

It is clear that there are symbols connected with all our senses. There are sound symbols, visual symbols, olfactory symbols, gustatory symbols and touch symbols. Our "feelings" are rendered in the language of touch or taste. It is interesting that symbols are always connected with the senses. Even things that are far above the senses and beyond contact with the senses are expressed and symbolized by sense symbols, simply because there is no alternative. We think in symbols, we act in symbols, we live in symbols, we learn in symbols.

If we don't realize this, we are not really living. If we don't see that form cannot be seen apart from its indwelling and presiding life, we are not really *living*. We are then like dead beings in a dead universe.

We are told that all sound symbols, nay all life, evolved out of the primeval sound, the *Pranava*. The supreme symbol is *Om*, the most sacred and secret word. To most people the Word is really secret, because it is too sacred to be understood and realized by them.

It is said that this supreme symbol was known to many peoples. The Egyptians held that the secret name of Ra, the Sun-god, was Ammon. Later it became a commonplace as Ammon-Ra, just as the sacred word of the Hindus is now on

the lips of many without being understood. In Syria the word 'Amen' was used. At first it was uttered at the beginning and at the end of prayers. Christians still use it and put it at the end of a prayer, where it is thought to mean: "So be it." Surely it means something like "so be it!" in the deepest sense of supreme creative energy. In the Gospels and in other scriptures we read that "in the beginning was the Word!"

Of the infinite number of sound and other symbols that evolved out of the Word some have been found to be universal, others to be the possession of a particular race or nation, or of the adherents of a particular religion, others again are known only to the inhabitants of a particular district or to the members of a particular clan or family. And others are symbols of individual people, and are of meaning only to them.

The latest schools of psychology, especially that of C. G. Jung, are deeply interested in symbology. They realize that man's life cannot be seen apart from symbols.

In his *Psychology of the Unconscious* Jung has dealt with the symbolism of ancient religions and of the mythology of many races, in connection with the life of ordinary people of the present day. For there is a deeply significant relation between the two. It is now recognized that dreams form the mythology of the individual as much as mythology represents the dream life of a race. Both in mythology and religion and in dreams of individuals there appear the same universal symbols. They are called *archetypes*. These universal symbols have the same meaning to people of different periods of history; to people in various religions and living in various parts of the world. They come out of the deepest layers of the "Collective Unconscious."

The "Collective Unconscious" is the great psychic storehouse of humanity. All human experience is laid down in it, from the very beginning of the human race. It is our heritage, and much of it is at our command. Our individual unconscious lives and moves in this collective unconscious, just like our conscious self lives and moves in conscious contact with others in society.

In the Collective Unconscious there is no East or West.

When we go into the inner life of man and penetrate those more superficial layers of his consciousness conditioned by the colour of his skin, the climate and soil of his country and the customs of his ancestors, we come to a psychic field which is neither particularly Eastern nor Western. We can even say more. It often happens, as we all know, that Easterners feel deeply attracted to Western life and Westerners to Eastern life. Also it is not at all a rare occurrence, for instance in the religious field, that an Easterner has religious dreams of a typical Western nature, or that a Westerner in a dream unexpectedly experiences the life behind, for instance, the form of an Eastern deity.

One of the archetypes is "the wise man in the heart." He represents a store of wisdom, and we may perhaps say, our inmost and deepest self. He is known in dreams and visions to people of all races and all religions. His form will, as a rule, be in accordance with the tradition of the dreamer or seer, though by no means in every case.

It appears that it is this wise man who sends messages to our conscious self in the form of dreams, daydreams and visions. These messages are contained in the language of symbols. Our unconscious knows this language very well, but to our conscious personality it is very much of a secret language.

Because we do not know much of the language of the Unconscious we understand little or nothing of these dream messages. The messages consist of combinations of symbols in such a way that they form a little story. Sometimes the story is meant as an eye-opener when we are about to make some mistake. As such they contain a warning. Sometimes they give a hint as to future action or are anticipatory. Sometimes they point to a mistake made long ago as the root of a present problem or trouble. Sometimes they contain only an impersonal parable of universal interest.

We must only try to understand the language of symbolism. I feel tempted to relate a dream of the last mentioned type, dreamt by a person I know very well. It was the first of a series of dreams, dreamt by a young man. I shall relate it in the first person.

" I dreamt that I was in an ancient gloomy castle, a vast medieval building with a number of dark passages, rooms and halls, and secret pitfalls and staircases. I was with a companion. There was hardly any furniture in it. Everything was very old and very vast, it was like a labyrinth. I did not feel at all at home. I was afraid, and for some reason my conscience was not clear. The same applied to my companion. I knew that the Lord of the castle was a friend, but of what avail was that in that dark and terrible place? I was afraid, and wanted to get away. Then suddenly I heard someone coming—something approaching. We both got into a panic and fled, each in an opposite direction. I fled into a dark passage and fell through a trap-door. Then I came through a short passage into a vast cage. It was infinitely large, and completely dark. Wire netting was all round. I was doomed to pass an infinity in that cage. My sorrow was intense, my suffering was indescribable. In the depth of my woe I uttered from time to time a wailing cry. It was terrible in its utter forlornness, loneliness and darkness. There seemed to be no way out, no hope. Once there was a faint light, and I saw the Lord of the castle looking at me from behind the bars. Then the darkness and terror engulfed me again. I uttered my cry, which I can still hear vibrating in my inner ear.

" Something in me said that this infinity had to last thirty years.

" Then this part of the dream suddenly finished and a new chapter, as it were, began. Again I am in a castle. But it is not the same ' I ', and it is not the same castle. The castle is not gloomy and dark and empty. It is full of light, and full of people, moving about on their business. It is full of furniture, everything is neat and up-to-date. The only point of similarity with the first castle is that it is also very big. Again I have at first a companion, but later I am alone.

" This time I have not at all a bad conscience. If in the first castle I did not know what to do and was full of fear, now on the other hand I am there with a purpose, and I am full of confidence that I shall achieve. I am there in that place because I have heard that in the underground depths of the castle is shut up a

miserable man. This man is supposed to utter from time to time a wailing cry. I have taken upon me to help him, and to liberate him from his prison. (There is not the slightest self-identification with that man—he is now a complete stranger.) For this purpose I go round in the castle, I enquire of many people how I can find the prisoner, I visit libraries and look into books, and study maps of the castle, in order to find out where he is and how I can get to him. And gradually I get deeper and deeper down in the castle where everything is getting more and more like that in the first part of the dream. But I am not at all afraid. At last I hear the wailing cry of the prisoner in the distance and it touches me strangely and deeply. Then finally, I stand before the heavily bolted door of the great prison, and am about to liberate him. Then the dream stops."

This dream contains a great number of significant hints. I shall mention only a few. The castle is the world. In the first part it is ancient and gloomy. The human personality makes mistakes and lives in ignorance, there is no purpose, no initiative, no discipline. It lives passively and passionately. It represents one aspect and part of our past—ages of ignorance and selfhood are, as it were, condensed in this symbolic picture of the lonely man in the dark and terrible castle. The world is terrible to him who lives in darkness. The world is a labyrinth! Where is light? Where is the way out of prison?

Yet even in the deepest depths of materiality there is one note of hope, however slight. Once the Lord of the castle was seen dimly behind the bars. But the dark night of matter is resumed. It lasts an infinity. The soul groans in darkness.

But the saviour lives. He goes out into the world to help another. He does not go out to help himself, he has the definite purpose to help *another*. By helping another he eventually liberates himself. I think this may be one of the most significant hints of the dream.

At first we have companions, in ignorance as well as in knowledge, in sin as well as in virtue. Later when we begin to do matters in right earnest we have to face life alone. Our

knowledge begins to be specialized, certain things nobody can understand. Nobody can help us to choose in the greater problems of our course but the divinē voice in our heart, giving purpose and direction to our life. It takes away our primitive fear of the world, our fear of life, and inspires us with supreme confidence.

In dreams of this kind we are in touch with psycholocial and spiritual realities. People who have such dreams—and they are not a few—affirm that they present a world with certain happenings which in a way is more real than the world of everyday life. In fact that well-known everyday world is much more dream-like.

The messages which come to us from that inner world are sometimes of such a nature that we could not possibly invent them. The Unconscious is a wonderful creator and has great dramatizing capacities.

In this Unconscious live a great many psychological factors. So many parts of our personality are in it, sometimes requiring to be readjusted, or sometimes seriously at war with one another. In that case we speak about a "complex."

All the happenings in our dreams tell us something about our unknown inner life. All the persons that appear are part personalities of ourselves or of collective humanity. If we dream for instance of our mother, the dream has in 9 out of 10 cases nothing to do with our own mother, but the person of the mother is the symbol of the mother aspect in us or of the Universe in man. To unevolved people appear only ordinary part-personalities, to people that are striving to attain God or Self-realization, higher personalities appear, in either dream or vision. These personalities then come out of deeper layers of the Unconscious. They are universal.

Such universal symbols or archetypes let us consider for a moment. One category consists of symbols like for instance a crown, a triangle, an abyss, a ray of light, a door or gate. Whether they appear to a European, an Asiatic, an African or an American, they contain the same meanings, and hold the same messages whether in dream or mythology. Another category consists of personalities: gods and demons. Former schools of

psychology used to regard the gods and the devils of religion as phantasmagoria, the latest school takes them very seriously. There are many thinkers today who realize that the deities as well as the devils are psychological realities. They live and move and have their being within us. The deities preside in our superconscious, the devils in our subconscious. Both have to be realized to exist by the spiritual seeker. It may be dangerous to ignore the demons. I like to narrate a dream of the same person mentioned before. This dream was a terrible experience, which shook him to the very depths of his being and made a lasting impression upon him.

The person in question dreamt that he was in a room with a friend who was lying down helpless on the ground. First a glorious-looking young man came in, radiating light and love. In spirit the dreamer bowed down before him, realizing his supreme spiritual significance. This man occupied himself mostly with the helpless friend. Then by another door entered another man, who did not come up to the group, but kept somewhat in the background. The dreamer went to him and said: "Now we are all together here, and alone in the world, let us be friends," and he tried to shake hands with the fourth person. But this one turned his back to the dreamer. The dreamer, however, insisted, and tried to grasp his hand again. Then suddenly this fourth man managed to clasp the *left* hand of the dreamer looking at him with a triumphant and sardonic smile, not letting go the hand at all, and the dreamer suddenly knew with great terror: It is the devil! And he tried to save himself by rushing back to waking consciousness. For days after he lived in terror, for the dream had been of a startling reality, and he still saw those evil eyes, and the pointed nose, and felt the claw-like grasp. He had never thought of the possibility of 'the devil' really existing in some way or other, and had regarded him only as some medieval phantasm.

Years after he spoke about this dream to Jung, the great psychiatrist. Jung confirmed the conclusion he had arrived at himself by that time. All through the period of his spiritual striving and unfoldment he had systematically refused to see evil,

to recognize the dark side in nature and in his own self. He had imagined everything to be good, Nature to be pure. In short, he had idealized everything, all the time, however, nurturing the dark forces in his unconscious. The message from within was that he must recognize the existence of those dark forces, in order to be able to overcome them. They are like a hidden disease. If we do not take the proper medicine against it, it may seriously impair our health and eventually destroy our body.

In those four persons we have a complete picture of the main forces in human psychology. The dreamer himself is the conscious personality, the active person. The helpless friend is his unconscious self, which is passive. The state of lying down is only a symbol of passivity. The glorious spiritual man is a symbol of what we might call the higher self of humanity, and the fourth man of the lower self, or collective devil.

In our unconscious live forces and personalities which are intimately our own, and others which are collective, that is to say, common to all humanity.

The person who had had this dream, had seen his *personal* shadow or personal devil several times in previous dreams, and always recognized it as such. Once it took the shape of his own double, trying to tempt him to stop meditation practices and enjoy the world, another time it took the shape of a great hairy ape. He always knew it was part of his *own* nature, he was slightly afraid, but watched it full of interest. This time, however, it was something outside his personal nature. It was something not belonging to him that was making an attack on his personality. And he was mortally afraid in a spiritual sense. The experience and vision of Sri Ramakrishna when he saw this "devil" pass out of him, is well known. He called it the *Pāpa-purusha*.

In connection with this there is another interesting universal symbol. It is the symbolism of right and left. Among all peoples, in all religions the right hand symbolizes the conscious, the light, the spiritually or morally right. The left hand symbolizes the unconscious, the dark, the sinister. The gods and helpful psychological powers have been associated in all ages with the right hand.

The word "right" does not for nothing indicate a moral right. In the English language the association between "left" and "wrong" or "dark" does not exist. In Latin, Italian and other languages, however, it is different. "Left" is "sinistro," which means both left and sinister or gloomy. In India also the right hand takes precedence over the left, the right hand is meant for pure purposes, the left for impure ones.

If we read books of Eastern psychology, we are struck by the number of gods and demons that are mentioned. Most interesting is for instance the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, so ably edited by Dr. Evans-Wentz. The pleasant and wrathful deities represent different mental states. Modern psychology takes those psychological entities very seriously. In some abnormal cases it happens that a human personality becomes subverted, his conscious becomes unconscious, and a part of his unconscious takes conscious control. In the East one would say: Such a man has become possessed by a devil. In the West he is nowadays not exorcised by a priest, but dealt with by the psycho-analyst.

Our so-called "enlightened age," which has now luckily come to an end because scientists have begun to realize they hardly know anything yet, had neglected and ignored all these powers in our unconscious. When no explanation can be found it is always easiest to deny things. This ostrich policy in science is now dying out.

The deities of the superconscious, as well as the devils of the subconscious are collective symbols, built up by many generations of God-worshippers and devil-fearers. Great persons, teachers and prophets became such living symbols in the Collective Unconscious. They are of course not a product of the human mind, they have life and soul of their own. They are unseen personalities moving in the collective unconscious world, and appearing to the conscious personality in messages from the Unseen—in dreams and visions.

The Divine Mother appears to persons all over the world, and has appeared in all ages. Her form and special attributes may vary according to the religion and the period in which the

beholder lives, yet She is the same divine power in the soul of all people and in the heart of humanity.

The same applies to the other great Deities. In the dreams and visions which grant us a glimpse into the deepest layers of our being, where form ceases to be, lie the great realities in symbolic form, realities "more real" than the fleeting show of "real life." The deeper we dig into the soul, the more universal, the more real the substance which we find. All details of the individual lives, the little fames, glories, vanities and beauties, will all pass away but the great Deities in the very bottom of the soul will not pass away, for they are eternal. Civilizations may come up and go down, ages may pass, and everything on the face of the earth may be changed, yet man will always again worship the Mother Goddess, he will always again bow to the Divine Teacher in the deepest recess of his heart. To the Deities in the soul of man, because they are great realities, will eventually always be the victory, though the screen of night is sure to hide the light from time to time. The dark forces in the unconscious—death, ignorance and *adharma*—will masquerade each time in the history of the world as well as in the history of the individual, in a different form, but the light at the centre of the universe, that is, in man's heart, will always be one and the same, bound to pierce its blessing rays from time to time through the gloom. In the words of the *Gītā*: "Whenever *adharma* prevails and *Dharma* declines, then I manifest myself in a human form to re-establish *Dharma* and to destroy evil." Sages like Sri Rama-krishna come on the crest of the divine wave, which is bound to come from time to time, welling up out of the depths of the soul of mankind.

The importance of the lesser deities and of the demons that appear to our inner vision must not be overrated. The great mystics as well as the students of psychology warn against this. We must not be swept off our feet by them, but realize that *we* as individual souls with the grace of God are masters of our fate and of our ultimate goal. In the course of time nothing can hinder our progress without our will. If we strive towards the very highest we must aim to be free, both of the entities of our

subconscious and of the beings in the superconscious. The latter may seem strange. At the end of the third book of Patanjali we read that response to the overtures of divine shapes which appear to us in meditation, is a sure means of preventing us from attaining the highest spiritual goal.

The great Tibetan *yogi* Milarepa said: "The visions of the forms of the Deities upon which one meditateth are merely the signs attending perseverance in meditation. They have no intrinsic worth in themselves." The *Demchog Tantra* gives the same idea: "*Devatās* are but symbols representing the various things which occur on the Path, such as the helpful impulses and the stages attained by their means." Both quotations (taken from Dr. Evans-Wentz's *Milarepa*) could almost have been taken from a recent text-book of psychology. It is also the message of the Buddha that Truth and Liberation lie beyond the Deities. All who have studied the life of Sri Ramakrishna, know, that in order to attain the highest realization, he had to overcome even the Mother Herself. He had to go beyond Her, he had to go deeper, and it took him a tremendous struggle before he could manage to do it.

And yet he could never have become what he was if he had not been fully and unreservedly given unto Her. Also this is part of his message, worthy of notice to a world in which there are so many that imagine they can arrive at Truth directly, without the aid of divinity, without the help of spiritual symbolism.

Thus we have seen that on the one hand the Gods are symbols of great realities of spirit. The Gods are more real than we are, because they stand above race and history. Relatively and comparatively speaking we are mere dreams, continually moving and changing. Our destiny, our real life lies in the deities and *gurus* in our inmost being. For they are eternal in as far as humanity is eternal.

But it is difficult to take the symbol for the supreme reality, if possible at all. "That" is beyond symbols. Silence seems to be the fittest symbol for it. In this connection it is interesting that the highest (or one but highest) picture in the series of

mystical Tarot cards is "the World." As if the universe were the fittest symbol for Reality, for the Self.

The gods are the primeval words, the fundamental moving powers of our psychology. They are the great secrets of the universe. In ancient Egypt it was believed that if one knew the secret names of the gods, one became all-wise and all-powerful. Thus indeed it is. It is man's task to learn the secrets which are, strangely enough, more manifest and more real than himself! A great Persian mystic once said: "God is manifest, and if we do not see Him, we are blind!"

Every form in the universe is a symbol, since it is the expression of some indwelling life. It has a message for us if we care to listen. Every happening in life is symbolic, every incident contains a message to us, a message from the wise man in the Unconscious, a message from the Mother, a message from God. Those who have the eyes to see, know that they can learn from even the most insignificant-looking events. To us many things seem trivial and insignificant. To the great ones like Sri Rāmakrishna they are pregnant with meaning. They know the secret language of the universe. Therefore they tell us to watch continually and listen with an open heart—to be always "at it."

Of course there is symbolism in all the states of consciousness. Dream symbolism is in a way very remarkable because sometimes symbols appear which are entirely new to us. They startle us with their newness. They come to us out of the collective unconscious. We suddenly realize that there is beyond our little personal world a great world of unknown realities.

Sri Ramakrishna demonstrated that all religions are fundamentally one. They are as so many roads leading to the same—one—goal. They may err in some minor points of theology or in some of their methods of achievement, but in their *basis* they are one. Psychology has come to the same conclusion, in the first place not by way of personal realization, but by comparative studies and by the ordinary methods of science. The study of the collective unconscious proves the unity of religious experience beyond any doubt. The same laws apply to the mind and the

heart of the European or the Asiatic, and what is more, the same laws apply to his soul. Deep down in the soul there is no East or West, there is only humanity. Deep down in the soul the quarrels of the religions as to their supremacy cease. There is only Truth.

This does not mean of course that there ought to be only one religion. The various religions of the world supply various psychological needs. We cannot require all people to believe the same things and to act in the same manner, as little as we can want them to eat the same things and to wear the same dress. Unity is a blessing, uniformity may be a curse.

Another of the great achievements of Sri Ramakrishna is that he was a herald of the unity of spirit and matter. The last century was the close of a period of dualism. Materialism and spiritualism fought for supremacy. It was difficult to be at one and the same time a materialist and a believer in spirit. Sri Ramakrishna realized that spirit and matter are one. It is even wrong to mention two names, two words! Matter is the expression of spirit, is a symbol of spirit, nay, more, is spirit.

We are living now in a period in which science is once again dealing with religious experiences without cutting them up into pieces. Now psychological science is no more engaged in spiritual vivisection, but serving its purpose by explanation and solution of psychological knots.

60 years before modern science in its latest achievements in the persons of physicists like Eddington and Jeans, and psychologists like Jung and Maeder, signed the peace treaty between religion and science, Ramakrishna Paramahansa proclaimed to the world their essential unity.

Sometimes it is enlightening to study the root of symbols, to find the origin of the meaning of words. For instance the word *matter*. What does it mean? It means *materia*, the Latin word for matter, derived from *mater*, mother. Matter is the mother. Matter-energy is a symbol of the Mother Goddess.

In ancient Christianity the Holy Ghost was synonymous with the Mother. The Holy Ghost, or spirit was the divine creative

energy as embodied in matter. Its symbol was a dove. It was something like Sakti. And instead of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost there was often mentioned the Father, the Mother and the Son, not unlike Saivism.

Science seems to have given up the causalistic view of the universe. By giving up determinism it has opened the door to the indeterminism of spiritual phenomena. By doing this, science has entered on a new era. The period of materialism is finished, at least as a philosophy.

I found in a recent scientific book about the Universe, I think of Jeans, that when we get to the root of matter, we can only find . . . mind! If this is really true, it means that the doctrines of the ancient Hindu and Buddhist sages which posit mind as the creator of the Universe, are well confirmed:

In any case more than fifty years before science began to confirm such views tentatively, Ramakrishna realized these truths in his own being and gave them to the world. He is a great prophet who ushered in the new age some time before the doctrines and the structures of the age of duality began to give way and break down.

Ramakrishna himself is a symbol—a symbol of such richness and depth that he has to be realized to be understood. No man can bring him to us. He himself only can make us know him.

May his words go home to the hearts of the men and women of today, may his example be followed, may his love inspire, may his realizations cause realization, and may his message go all over the world, for the good of many! So be it.

RAMAKRISHNA

PROF. G. E. MONOD-HERZEN

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In order to see a country, to know the hearts of its inhabitants, and finally to learn to appreciate things in their true perspective, the best method is to travel,—the tranquil pilgrimage along the

roads taking advantage of the hospitality of those who live at the side of the route.

I tried to follow this principle all through my life, asking for alms from some persons and instruction from all who possessed spiritual wealth and offered to share it with others. It is in this way that I met Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

On a beautiful summer day in Switzerland I walked with a light heart full of joy towards the little house of Romain Rolland who received me for two days. An Indian too was going to the house like me. We entered it together and when Rolland appeared I had much to hear but nothing to say. The Indian was Mr. B. K. Mukherjee, and he spoke of Ramakrishna, Rolland knew him by name, but I think it was on that day that he formed the resolution of writing the book which he wrote and which he had to write on Ramakrishna,—he is the living experience, the life itself of religious unity. It is the affirmation, not in the complexity of doctrines but in the simplicity of heart, of this glorious unity of which the various human religions are but so many reflections.

A hundred years ago the Swan of Dakshineswar took to its wings. But today his words seem to me to be more necessary than ever. I am not speaking here of India, I am thinking of Europe, my sick and unhappy motherland—this Europe rent asunder by battles which reveal its spiritual poverty.

In Europe religion has been everywhere relegated to a position of secondary importance: tolerance is born of the diminution of spiritual values. Fanaticism has disappeared from the domain of religion and invaded that of politics and sociology. It is as dangerous today to be excommunicated politically in dictatorial countries as it was formerly in the Spain of Inquisition to be excommunicated from religion. Everywhere in Europe hatred divides those who do not adhere to the same creed or to the same social ideal.

Now that the Ramakrishna Mission is expanding in the West it may be hoped that the winged words of the Master, adapted to the form of present times, should import tolerance and love into this chaos of political religions. Now his influence would

manifest itself on the two faces of the orient and the occident, and illuminate our whole world with that light which we pray for so much today.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND UNIVERSAL RELIGION

SWAMI NIRVEDANANDA

Ramakrishna Mission

With my heartiest greetings of love and goodwill and my respectful obeisance to you all who have assembled here on this sacred, solemn and historic occasion, let me address you very briefly on Sri Ramakrishna and Universal Religion.

One need hardly say anything by way of introducing Sri Ramakrishna to you. You know very well how India, from one end to the other, is being stirred up to revive her ancient cultural ideals by the momentous influence of the inspiring life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. And you also know that this benign influence has travelled far beyond the borders of this land.

In spite of the fact that to the vast mass of humanity residing outside this land India means little more than a tiny outline on the world's atlas, in spite of the fact that to some of the foreigners India still appears to be only a land of dark savages who have yet to be reclaimed, taught to stand and walk like human beings, it is significant to notice that during the last twelve months some of the towering intellectuals of the modern world together with hundreds of seekers of truth and peace have rallied enthusiastically round the Birth-Centenary of a poor, barely literate Brahmin priest of the 19th century belonging to an out-of-the-way village of India.

Obviously, there must be something in Sri Ramakrishna that has its appeal for all men of all countries. In and through the language of his life must have been expressed some universal, soul-stirring ideas and ideals that pierce through the hard crust of creed and colour obsessions and reach the very core of the heart of humanity. The late lamented French savant, Dr. Sylvain Levi, was perfectly right when he said, "As Ramakrishna's life and

we are making everything about us in every compartment of our social life shaky, confused and chaotic. Who knows if we are not rushing at a frantic speed by a downward curve of evolution? Who knows if the beast-in-man released from traditional bonds of religion and morality has not suddenly jumped out to enjoy a holiday?

This, in short, is the world in which Sri Ramakrishna has appeared as the exact antithesis of all that we see about us. He gave values to those very things that the modern world is trying to ignore and set aside. And this is precisely why, though he had neither wealth nor academic distinction, nor power and prestige in the temporal sense, he grew up to a stature that is becoming visible from the farthest corner of the earth.

Religion was the breath of his life, morality his backbone. In his perspective, realization of God appeared to be the worthiest object of human life; purity and devotion, love and humility, selflessness and service appeared to be the real wealth of man far superior in value to anything that the external world could give. And he developed all these to a unique degree of perfection. Through both his body and mind he has left a brilliant record of God-intoxication, spotless purity and surging love for humanity.

With a mind broad as the sky, deep as the ocean and pure as a crystal he plumbed the depths of spiritual truths, and demonstrated one by one by his intuitive experience the truths behind the entire wisdom of the past taught by the world's ancient seers and prophets. He realized God as the nameless, formless, transcendental Absolute. The primary underlying substratum sustaining the universe instead of being merely a construction of philosophical speculation, mathematical abstraction or poetic imagination was with him a hard, tangible, living fact of direct experience. Then he realized that the entire diversity of appearances that we call nature was nothing but a manifestation of the same Impersonal God. Thus before his spiritual vision did unfold the majestic and magnificent oneness of the universe towards which all sciences and all philosophies are surely and steadily converging—oneness, that alone can furnish the concepts of equality and fraternity with a rationale and provide the world with a firm basis

for the much-needed edifice of universal brotherhood. Then again, he realized through a multitude of spiritual visions that the same Impersonal God does appear as Personal God with various names and various forms before the immaculate minds of earnest devotees.

Then, standing on the bed-rock of his rich and varied experience, he declared with all the emphasis that he could command that all creeds, Hindu, Islamic, Christian or of any other denomination, based on monism, qualified monism or dualism, are so many distinct paths leading alike to the same goal, namely the realization of God, the Final Cause of the universe, who is one and the same in spite of innumerable varieties of spiritual visions.

This truth was declared by the Vedic seers in the pre-historic era of human civilization when they chanted "*Ekaṁ sad viprā bahudhā vadanti*," "Truth is one, sages call it by various names." Since then, the spiritual heart of the Hindus has been tuned to religious catholicism. And whenever the mass-mind swayed by blind impulses tended to be narrow and exclusive, mighty spiritual seers have appeared in this land to reiterate the message of universalism in religion. And Sri Ramakrishna, the latest of this brilliant group, has become conspicuous by preaching the same truth of Universal Religion not only to the different sects of the Hindus but also to all the religious communities of the world.

Undoubtedly time is now ripe for realizing this message of Universal Religion. By the wonderful achievements of science the world has already been compressed into a small and compact mass. Secular knowledge augmented by contributions pouring in from different quarters of the globe has already stepped out of esoteric seclusion. It is high time that spiritual knowledge also should be immediately delivered out of all ruts of communal and sectarian exclusiveness.

Modern knowledge has made it perfectly clear that unity in diversity is the very keynote of nature's music. Sri Ramakrishna observed the operation of this law even in the realm of religion. In spite of the varieties of skulls and complexions, the same human heart is beating with the same rhythm all over the world. And

for the growth, expansion and illumination of the human heart, Sri Ramakrishna observed the same set of essentials in the basic structure of every form of religion. Just as the same group of essential ingredients is assimilated through innumerable varieties of physical food, just as the same thoughts and sentiments are expressed through hundreds of languages and dialects, so the same group of spiritual truths is served to humanity through numerous sets of symbolologies. Beneath the superficial crusts of dogmas, mythologies and rituals, Sri Ramakrishna observed the same kernel of spiritual truth. Surely, devotion and purity, love and humility, selflessness and service, search for God and resignation to the Divine Will are things valued equally by all pious souls, no matter to what particular churches they may happen to belong.

Indeed, Sri Ramakrishna's life inspires us to hush all notes of discord by emphasizing this central unity and making room for all the varieties of creeds that add to the beauty, richness, strength and grandeur of the House of Religion. His life inspires us to remain strictly loyal to our individual churches and yet embrace the followers of all other creeds as fellow-pilgrims on the path of Blessedness. It inspires us to integrate in this way all the religious forces of the world and direct the same to deliver human civilization from the catastrophic consequence of its present confusion of cultural ideals.

Indeed, the more will humanity realize the import of Sri Ramakrishna's contributions, the more clearly will it see that with his life has opened a new chapter of our religious history. His life appears to be a symbolic suggestion of a new era when all sect-bound thoughts will be released, all narrowness and bigotry will disappear, when religion will be comprehended in terms of universal humanity and all the varying notes issuing out of the different creeds of the world will combine to form a magnificent and undreamt-of Harmony of Religions. May God grant us the necessary strength, vision and urge for expediting the advent of the glorious era of Universal Religion, Universal Brotherhood, Universal Love, Harmony and Peace!

SRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE MESSIAH OF
SPIRITUAL DEMOCRACY

SWAMI PARAMANANDA

Vedanta Centre, Boston, U. S. A.

MY SPIRITUAL KINSMEN

This seems to me the most appropriate way to address you who have come from the far corners of the globe to pay homage to the spirit of one who was the very embodiment of unity and universality. I specially made the long journey from America not only to attend this convention but to bring a message of love and goodwill from the American people for the success of this Parliament of Religions.

In 1893 a similar convention was held in Chicago in connection with the great World's Fair. The souls, who conceived the idea of bringing together under one roof, all the existing religions of the world, were inspired by a mighty Force.

The presence of Swami Vivekananda was an epoch-making event, not only for India, but for the whole world. It was not through accident that Swami Vivekananda stood before that august assembly and proclaimed: "It is a sin to call a man a sinner!" How such a statement must have startled a Western audience, accustomed to think that all men are conceived in sin and born in iniquity! Here was the voice of ancient India expressing through the mouth-piece of Swami Vivekananda that the soul is ever pure, immutable and divine.

The significant achievement of the 1893 Parliament did not lie in the fact that any one religion overrules the others, rather, it demonstrated vividly that all the peoples of the earth form one great human family and that all the various expressions of religion contain holy and masterful truths, so its natural result was the quickening of the thinking minds of the world to greater and more daring freedom of thought and expression.

During the last thirty-one years, it has been my destiny to live and work in the United States of America. I have travelled

extensively throughout the length and breadth of that vast country, lecturing in all the important cities, and have visited European countries several times for the purpose of spreading the cause of Vedānta following the custom inaugurated by the illustrious Swami Vivekananda.

During this long period of service, I have had ample opportunity to observe the influence of the last Parliament of Religions. Many organizations have sprung up in the name of unity, universality and brotherhood. A sincere endeavour has been made to abolish dogmatic narrowness, religious bigotry and other forms of racial misunderstanding. All this may be directly traced to the influence of the last Parliament of Religions held in the great metropolis of Chicago.

At this point, I want to say to my countrymen that if Swami Vivekananda's great victory on that occasion and during the subsequent years of his work in America had consisted in proselytizing and making converts to his own faith, his whole mission would have been a failure and the immortal teaching of his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, would have been defeated. On the contrary, his courage, his clarity of vision and his sincere, steadfast devotion to his Ideal, set a new standard in the realm of religious thought. He pointed out clearly that a missionary and a messenger of God may be a true brother to mankind wherever he is led and that the distinctions of caste, creed and nationality are but fictitious barriers, easily overcome by the idealist.

Swami Vivekananda's greatest service, to his Motherland and to the world at large, is that he unfurled the white flag of peace over the Western Hemisphere when he gave it the significant text: "Truth is one, always one, men call it by various names."

There is no accident in the cosmic universe. The convening of the Parliament of Religions in Chicago was not through chance and the convening of this present conference is also a matter of destiny. The Spirit of Sri Ramakrishna, the inspiration behind this whole conception, broods over this great and unique assembly and will guide it to a successful issue.

In order to gain a comprehensive view of the direct influence

of Sri Ramakrishna upon our modern life, it is necessary to understand existing conditions, social, religious and ethical both in the East and in the West at the time of his birth. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, the whole occidental thought-world, especially in the continent of North America, was going through a peculiar transition. The unprecedented advancement of Science, the ingenuity and inventive genius of man which released unimaginable power and resources for material advancement, brought about a natural reaction in the minds of the people, especially in regard to traditional religious faiths and dogmatic beliefs. Rationalistic thought gained ground every day and it became more and more difficult to accept and tolerate the existing tenets of religion.

At this period, there was a violent clash between the old and the new without the possibility of reconciliation. Science was regarded as the enemy of religion. Old-fashioned religion could no longer be accepted by men of rational instinct and scientific trend of mind. In the midst of this upheaval, the innate hunger of the people gave rise to new phases of spiritual expression designated as "new cults" such as Christian Science, Divine Science, Metaphysical Healing, New Thought, Spiritualism, Theosophy, etc.

A natural culmination of all this spiritual unrest was the convening of the Parliament of Religions in Chicago. It was not an accident that Swami Vivekananda, the great disciple and voice of Sri Ramakrishna, came there to represent India and her ancient culture.

Sri Ramakrishna's greatest contribution to the modern world of religious thought was to bring into it a note of definiteness. Our present age of multiple theories and intellectual speculation had set the hearts of men adrift in regard to God and the ultimate realities. Here we find Sri Ramakrishna rising like a star of hope in the midst of chaos and confusion. His equipment and self-expression did not lie in erudition and intellectual cleverness but in direct vision and perception. When we approach him, he does not try to confuse our mind with theological doctrines and metaphysical implications, instead he gives us this unique and

convincing statement, " Yes, I have seen God and known Him, and furthermore, I can help you to see and know Him."

It was this definiteness of the Master that captivated his disciple, Swami Vivekananda, who had explored restlessly and tirelessly, and in so doing, had acquainted himself with all the contemporary teachers of Sri Ramakrishna's time. Nowhere did he find any positiveness until his good fortune led him to the illumined Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

The Master was an untiring explorer in the realm of spirit. His mind was peculiarly bent upon practical demonstration in regard to what is ordinarily termed " the Unseen." He never wanted to accept anything without definite proof. In this respect, his mind is comparable to the minds of the scientists, and his apparent lack of learning was an asset rather than a handicap, because it was entirely uncoloured and unbiassed. No hazard was too great, no self-sacrifice too difficult for him. He gave himself wholly and completely for the purpose of discovering the end of all religions and by so doing made himself a channel through which the infinite power flowed with unalloyed clarity. As a result of his exploration in spiritual realms, he brought back the definite revelation that each religion, sincerely lived and practised, leads to the same goal of *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute.

I like to call Sri Ramakrishna the Messiah of Spiritual Democracy. An orthodox Hindu coming to the Saint found in him all the marks of his chosen *Avatāra* (incarnation). A follower of Mohammed saw in him all the characteristics of his prophet; while a Christian recognized the very Spirit of the living Christ.

He demonstrated by his life and example that there is nothing but Unity, that all men are the product of the same Substance whether it be called Brahmā, Vishṇu, Śiva, Kālī, Allah, Jehovah, Father in Heaven, or in the terms of the monists, the Absolute, the One, the Eternal Brahman. Names make no difference for they cannot alter the immensity and allness of that one Supreme Reality. That is why this cosmopolitan convention, held at the conclusion of the hundredth anniversary celebration of Sri

Ramakrishna's advent into this world is the most fitting homage we can lay at the feet of him who was a true unifier of mankind.

There are many illustrations of the genuine catholicity that pervaded Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual consciousness. Today, when we are constantly thinking in the terms of democracy, we cannot help being impressed with which dynamic force he brings this specific ideal to a practical issue. Certainly, there is nothing so needful for the endless and multiple diversity of these modern times as unity in diversity. It is the only foundation for universal tolerance, based as it is upon wisdom and truth. Although Sri Ramakrishna did not claim to be a social reformer or religious agitator, he offered as the fruition of his spiritual contemplation some vital principles, equally applicable to the social, moral and spiritual needs of mankind.

Sri Ramakrishna was not satisfied with one-sided attainment. He wanted to enjoy God in many ways—through devotion, through prayer, through songs, through whole-hearted concentration, in the rapture of meditation, and sometimes by plunging deep into *samādhi*, when he became entirely oblivious of his physical existence. This trait in his nature unfolded itself through his remarkable harmony of spirit which was not merely tolerance but the ability to find the same essence existent in every expression of religion.

How refreshing to find in this world of dissension and conflict, one who is the living example of God-concentration and one who makes his spiritual realization include the wholeness of divinity and the allness of humanity. His life, his spiritual aspirations and his *sādhana's* (methods by which he sought to attain his goal) are profoundly helpful to the modern man. He does not denounce anything or anyone but he offers a spiritual hypothesis for the remedy of all evils. He proves in his own life that high ideals can be lived on earth in the flesh even in this so-called materialistic age. His silent life of dynamic force laid a firm foundation for ideal democracy, since it brought forth the truth that every man is fundamentally a part of divine Essence, and that in spite of all differences, dogmatic variation and barriers of caste and nationality, man is a child of one indivisible, Absolute Being. The

realization of this fact provides a solution for the social, political, and religious evils that rend the skies of the world with the lightning of dissension, and the thunder and havoc of war.

Sri Ramakrishna's mysticism proves that not only super-men may attain the highest but even a common man may unfold his divinity. His methods are entirely unlike those of most reformers. He does not strike ; he does not denounce ; but by gentle, un-aggressive and unpretentious means, he clarifies the whole atmosphere of doubt and fear and fills the mind with positive thoughts. He is the veritable fulfilment of his own remarkable parable that if a piece of alum is dropped into muddy water, the mud settles in the bottom of the vessel and the water becomes clear. Intellectual scepticism and denunciation never produce anything constructive.

Sri Ramakrishna's practical idealism may be expressed in the words of the Nazarene, " Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." Also, " What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

In spite of the beauty and appealing idealism of these utterances, man has found it difficult to put them into practice, owing to his fear of personal loss. Despite his intellectual achievements, man has formed the habit of looking on religion with suspicion, fearing that it may deprive him of earthly gain. For this reason, when we see the great ideals of Jesus of Nazareth, of Gautama Buddha and of the Aryan Rishis manifested in the life of an exalted being, we believe that God and man are not separated by a vast expanse but are linked together through transcendental consciousness. We also see that God may become a living Reality in the life of man ; that we may not only aspire to know Him but that we may live with Him, talk with Him, walk with Him, and be wholly guided by Him in every hour of the day. When we are able to perceive this, then alone are we convinced of the eternal value of Truth and God.

Again, may I call Sri Ramakrishna the Messiah of Spiritual Democracy. He never forgets that his *Ishtam* is the same in

essence as the chosen Ideal of all other existing forms of thoughts and beliefs.

We can readily understand his tolerance for India's multiple faiths, but it is more unusual that he should reach out to know and understand the basic principles of Christianity, Mohammedanism and other religions of the world. Is not water known by many names? One calls it 'water,' another '*vāri*' and a third '*aqua*,' and a fourth '*pāni*,' yet it remains ever the same substance. In like manner, the one Absolute Being-Intelligence-Bliss is invoked in different ways by some as God, by others as Allah, Hari or Brahman.

The mission of Sri Ramakrishna was not to create another new sect in the already overcrowded religious atmosphere of India and of the world at large. His rare gift to mankind cannot be over-estimated. His mode of living, his simplicity of conduct, his naive, child-like parables, dynamic with the force of Truth, disarmed every one completely.

To unveil the illumined life of Sri Ramakrishna is to venture to portray the invisible spirit. May his passion for humility and service, sanctity and ecstasy of God, stimulate our minds so that they may reach out and attain the unattainable.

It is our great good fortune that we may, today, pay our humble tribute to the Saint of Dakshineswar, who has brought us together under this one roof. May his beneficent spirit shower upon us his divine love. May he help us to abolish all our differences and dissensions and fill our hearts with gladness and peace.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S MESSAGE TO THE MODERN WORLD

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India is essentially a spiritual country. It is not surprising that it should produce men of the highest spiritual culture, thereby

shedding imperishable lustre on her name. Beginning from pre-Vedic Ages down to the present, she has shown the path of communion with God by love, devotion and self-surrender. The celebrations of the Birth-Centenary of a great Indian religious teacher is indeed a sign of the awakening of her religious consciousness. We are on the eve of a New Age which marks the Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, just a century after another world figure universally known as Raja Rammohun Roy who held aloft to erring humanity the banner of Universal Brotherhood.

Sri Ramakrishna has become a household word in Bengal, nay in all India. His *Kathāmṛita* which was published for the first time in the monthly journal *Pūrnimā* published from Bansberia and edited by my humble self is an admirable book replete with sound moral maxims and simple but profound religious truths which fell from the lips of this great religious teacher of the world. In his life the highest morality and the highest spirituality met. He was married at the age of twenty-four to Sri Sarada Mani Devi, a girl of six. It was a marriage but in name ; for a betrothal it was and it was nothing more. He did not live with Sarada *en maritalement* when she grew up into womanhood, but constantly lived in spiritual ecstasy and accepted her as his first disciple, whom he used as an instrument for working out the Divine Will. Her life like his was dedicated to the service of God and humanity.

The name of Vivekananda is closely linked up with his *guru* whose religious enthusiasm inspired him to preach the Universal Religion of the Vedānta.

The world is moved today by the spiritual power of Ramakrishna who was the embodiment of Truth and Renunciation. Simple and unostentatious, with little or no scholastic education, he reached the highest pitch of perfection by a systematic course of religious training and discipline in all its different phases, and in spiritual realization, through the passage of years, he gained an intensity unparalleled in the history of the world. The harmony of all religions was the lesson of a life which realized the unity of the Godhead in diversity and the presence of the Divine Mother in everything. The worship of *Śakti* was the keynote of his religious life.

India, the spiritual home of the world from hoary antiquity, had degenerated, having lost her spiritual fervour, but has re-awakened at the divine call of Ramakrishna. This religious awakening betokens a glorious future for India, which had always sought to impart its teaching through the Vedas, Upanishads, *Gītā*, Tantras, *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita* and other sacred books for the highest good of humanity.

We see on all sides, the pulsations of a new life in a rejuvenated India, which has produced numberless sages and saints to the lasting glory of her ancient culture and civilization, thereby demonstrating to the world the triumph of soul force over brute force. The softening influence of Sri Ramakrishna had a wonderful effect upon the fiery spirit of Vivekananda, whose thundering voice moved the world to a sense of divinity and soul-power. Their ennobling influence has played no mean part in shaping the dis-integrated moral and spiritual forces of the great human family, in spite of the vicissitudes of maddening strifes and struggles during the last hundred years.

The life of Sri Ramakrishna, therefore, furnishes an example of the realization of God in man by life-long *sādhana*. His ideal of sacrifice and service to humanity irrespective of caste, colour or creed,—to men and women whom he regarded as no less than visible symbols of the Godhead—has effectively captured the imagination of the best thinkers of the world today. The inner significance of this world-wide celebration of the Centenary of his birth consists in the silent inauguration of a New Age which is fraught with the deepest consequences for the future of our nation as a whole. Sri Ramakrishna has infused new life into the philosophically dry bones of India. The potency of his teaching is bound to act and react powerfully on the jaded nerves of humanity.

It is quite in the fitness of things that a World Parliament of Religions is being held as a part of the Centenary celebrations. Sri Ramakrishna himself was a living Parliament of Religions, for did he not undergo the spiritual disciplines of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and other religions, one after another and realize God

in each path? May he give us the strength to live the life he lived and practise the ideals he taught!

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

AS THE TEACHER OF SYNTHETIC HINDUISM AND OF A NATION-BUILDING RELIGION IN INDIA

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I. SOCIAL AND NATIONAL ASPECTS OF RELIGION

Religion has not only an individual value but a social and national value as well. It is easy to confine religion to mere individual ecstasy or to mere philanthropy. But he is the man of integrated vision who realizes that the true religion not only binds man to God but binds man to man as well. It is easy to make religion a divine force. Indeed the history of humanity is largely the history of hatreds in the name of the God of Love and wars in the name of the Prince of Peace. All this has been due to a false and distorted vision of religious values in life. Even in regard to the purely individual and personal values of the religious life, we find that some persons starve the body and others hamper it and yet others try to forget it in their search for the welfare of the soul. It is not given to all men, not even to all saints, to have a calm and balanced and inclusive outlook. It is the privilege of the greatest of the sons of God to have a unitive vision and an integrated outlook, to see life steadily and see it whole, and to irradiate the life human by the life divine.

It has been the good fortune of India to have a succession of such saints of integrated and unitive vision. India has been well called the mother of religions. Whatever may have been the heights or depths of political life in India, she never faltered in her vision of God. From the time when the R̥g-Vedic Rishis declared—*Ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti*, the inclusiveness of the Indian mind has grown and has never declined or decreased.

In the *Bhagavad-Gītā* the voice divine carried the inclusiveness to the loftiest heights possible. The same integrated and unitive vision was the privilege of Kālidāsa and of Śaṅkara. Though in later times narrowness and sectarianism became rampant, many later teachers recaptured the ancient vision again and again and gave a renewed vigour to the national heart.

II. WHAT IS SYNTHETIC HINDUISM?

Hinduism has no founder in the sense in which other religions in the world have got founders. The source of Hinduism is the Veda, and the Veda is eternal and is merely imparted by God, at the beginning of each cycle of creation as a chart for the guidance of humanity. The teachings of the Vedas are implemented and amplified by the Darśanas and Smritis and Itihāsas and Purāṇas and Āgamas. There is a synthesis running through all of them, and that synthesis (*samanvaya*) has been achieved by the Vedānta. So to an outsider Hinduism appears chaotic and even self-contradictory, but the doctrine of the *adhikāri* brings in a cementing and unifying bond and makes Hinduism a League of Religions which are congruent and harmonious and which have their final source in the Vedas.

Let us never forget the primary fact that the basis of the higher spiritual life is the ethical life. The *Katha Upanishad* says:

Nāvīrato duṣcharitānnāśānto nāsamāhitah

Nāśāntamānaso vāpi prajñānenainamāpnuyāt,

i.e. "Neither the unrestrained from wickedness nor the unrestrained nor the unmeditative, nor one with unpacified mind, can attain This (Ātman) even by knowledge." 'Dharma' is the name given to the totality of thoughts and words and acts binding towards the welfare and salvation of the soul. Unless each human being does his duty well, social life would be impossible. Without proper social life, the spiritual life would be hindered at every step. Let no one imagine that *Dharma* means ritual alone. Ceremonial purity must go hand in hand with ethical purity. Both are needed to achieve mental purity without which spiritual happiness is absolutely unattainable.

The Hindu religion stresses the doctrines of *Karma* and Re-incarnation. These doctrines distinguish it from all the other religions of the world. They mean and declare that there is a law of moral causation which is similar to the law of physical causation. They reconcile most rationally the inequalities of life with the abounding grace of God. *Jñāna* (wisdom) can burn up *karma* and cancel *Sañchita* and *Āgāmi karmas* and also nullify the deep-rooted *vāsanās* (tendencies), though not the fruits, caused by *Prārabdha karma*. This is a cosmos ruled by God, and hence, just as old *karmas* must have their way, the counteracting new *karmas* also must have their way. God is Love as well as Law. Devotion to Him will make us realize our true nature as being pure soul in its essential and eternal and inalienable nature of *Sachchidānanda* and as being separate from the body and senses and the mind and will confer on us eternal and infinite bliss.

It is on the bed-rock of the above truths that the higher *sādhana*s of Hinduism have been built. The link between the general activity of the embodied soul and the self-realization of the eternal and infinite bliss of pure soul life is *Karma-Yoga*. It has the element of *karma* and the element of *yoga* as well. It is called *yoga*, because it introduces that transmuting touch (*Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*, *Gītā*, II. 50) by which the state of action and striving and pain is transfigured into the state of self-poised spiritual bliss.

When the mind is thus purified by *Karma-Yoga*, it should practise meditation and contemplation by *Yogic sādhana* so as to attain concentration. It is only a man of true concentration of mind that can turn his mind definitely and continuously in the direction of God-love and God-realization. The ascending scale of *sādhana*s is *Karma-Yoga*, *Raja-Yoga*, *Bhakti-Yoga* and *Jñāna-Yoga*. *Bhakti-Yoga* is concentrated devotion, and *Jñāna-Yoga* is concentrated knowledge in its highest form of *Anubhava* or *Vijñāna* (Realization).

Bhakti and *prapatti* are often said to be separate, and the southern school of Vaishnavism exalts *prapatti* over all other *sādhana*s. Here we get into sectarian emphasis. The battles of *karma* and *jñāna* were fought before. Later on the battles of

jñāna and *bhakti* were fought. And yet later we had the spectacle of a civil war between *bhakti* and *prapatti*. But after all we cannot love God without knowing Him and we cannot know Him without loving Him. Even so we cannot become full of self-surrender (*prapatti*) without becoming full of devotion (*bhakti*). Nor can we become full of *bhakti* (devotion) without becoming full of self-surrender (*prapatti*). Nor are we justified in imagining any cleavage between *kainkaryā* (service) and *bhāva* (devotional feeling). Devotion means love of God and rises in value when it becomes more and more free from all selfishness and makes us love humanity more and more and immerse ourselves in God-meditation more and more.

III. SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S SYNTHESIS OF HINDUISM

The greatest of the interpreters of God to man in India in recent times was Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. His early life was a wonderful preparation for the vast and vivid synthesis of his ripe religious realizations. He fell frequently into ecstasy in his boyhood when he saw beautiful objects in nature or heard devotional music full of ravishing tenderness of feeling. He became the priest of Rani Rasmani's Kālī temple. There his realization of the divine secret of the world became keen and full. One day, after years of vain longing and frustrated expectation, he realized the omnipresent divine. He himself said about that sudden and unique experience: "I saw an Ocean of Spirit, boundless, dazzling. In whatever direction I turned great luminous waves were rising . . . I lost all *ordinary* and *natural* consciousness and I fell . . . How I passed that day and the next I know not. Round me rolled an ocean of ineffable joy. And in the depths of my being I was conscious of the presence of the Divine Mother." That was why and how he was able to reply to Vivekananda who asked if he had seen God (a question which he put in vain to Keshab Chander Sen and other great men) and say: "I see Him, as I see you, only far more intensely."

Such realization of the omnipresent Divine is the highest summit of all human realizations. It can be reached by any one

of the many well-known roads leading to the kingdom of Heaven which is in all of us. Such store of *sādhana*s has been called by Rolland as "the science of directed ecstasy." A *sannyāsini* and later on a *sannyāsin* named Tota Puri aided Sri Ramakrishna by imparting to him their disciplined knowledge of the scriptural and traditional means of attaining superconscious and blissful spiritual experience. In modern India the preoccupations due to the complexities of modern economic life which require higher standards of life and to the intricacies—often purposeless and ineffectual and sometimes socially deleterious—of modern democratic life leave but little time or energy or inclination to men and women to seek and get the composure and serenity which form the *sine qua non* of true spiritual illumination or to go through the long and arduous travail of the *sādhana*s needed for the attainment of such illumination. If this is the case in modern India despite racial experience and tendencies during many thousands of years, we can imagine the averseness of modern men and women elsewhere in the world to submit to the discipline and travail of such arduous *sādhana*s.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was tireless in his *sādhana*s and reaped the divine fruit of his matchless striving and search. He was blessed with a ceaseless and blessed vision of the Divine Mother. He realized and proclaimed that Religion is not mere creed or ritual or dogma or even mere philanthropy but is realization. In a world dominated by the concept of the Fatherhood he gained the loving devotion of all to the concept of the Motherhood of God. In India there has been ceaseless internecine war over the superiority of this or that *sādhana*, over this or that aspect of God, and over this or that realization of God. Sri Ramakrishna ended that war for ever by proving all the *sādhana*s and realizing all the aspects of God. Many have been the battles in India as to whether God is formless or has form. Sri Ramakrishna realized both aspects and said: "God with form and God without form are not two different Beings. He who is with form is also without form. So to a devotee God manifests Himself in various forms. Just think of a shoreless ocean—an infinite expanse of water—no land visible in any direction, only here and

there visible blocks of ice formed by intense cold. Similarly under the cooling influence, so to say, of the deep devotion of His worshipper, the Infinite reduces Himself to the finite and appears before Him as a Being with form. Again as on the appearance of the sun the ice melts away, so on the appearance of the sun of knowledge, God with form melts away into the formless."

Thus his teaching that religion is realization has given us a dynamic power that will make us pure. His teaching of the Motherhood of God will make us tender and sympathetic and kind to one another. His teaching about the value of the various *sādhanās* and the truth of the various aspects of God will make us tolerant and united. We shall hear no more about the ancient and futile controversies about *Advaita* and *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita*, or about *jñāna* and *bhakti* and *karma*. When the people are pure and tender and sympathetic and kind and united a great nation must and will be born. On this occasion of the celebrations of the Centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna let us offer our homage to the great Indian nation and to its greatest modern teacher of nation-building religion.

IV. RAMAKRISHNA AND VIVEKANANDA AS NATION-BUILDERS

Thus in Sri Ramakrishna, the man of spiritual realization, we find intense love and service of man. He taught in homely words and in beautiful parables and stories like Christ. Though he discussed shrewdly every kind of selfishness and hypocrisy, he never hated any one though he admonished many persons whose professions and practices did not agree. The man of true religious realization is a man of large tolerance and charity of spirit. Life was to Sri Ramakrishna a *divine comedia*, which he observed with amused and observant eyes. He showed that the golden lamp of spiritual realization will not go out in the wind-tossed crowded thoroughfares of life.

Swami Vivekananda got his flaming passion for service and power of synthesis from his holy master. He cried out in a passion of anguish: "May I be born and reborn again and suffer a thousand miseries if only I am able to worship the only

God in whom I believe, the sum-total of all souls, and above all my God the wicked, my God the afflicted, my God the poor of all races!" It was he that inspired the Ramakrishna Mission with the ideals of Renunciation and Service which have been their watchwords all along.

V. THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION AND THE IDEALS OF THE
HAPPINESS OF SERVICE AND THE SERVICE OF HAPPINESS

The Ramakrishna Mission is the result of the dynamic inspiration imparted by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Its ideals are the Happiness of Service and the Service of Happiness. To the war-weary and distracted West it emphasizes the service of Happiness. To the starving and idle East it emphasizes the Happiness of Service. The essence of the teachings of both the Master and the Disciple is thus expressed by the latter:

"Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest the divine within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this, either by work or worship or psychic control or philosophy—by one or more or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas, or rituals or books, or temples or forms are but secondary details."

Let the whole world treasure and follow this supreme message!

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

PRESIDENT FREDERIC B. ROBINSON

College of the City of New York, U. S. A.

The lives of vital men leave great influences behind them recorded in books, expanding in organizations and working in the lives of others. There have been few men more vital than Vivekananda, strong and handsome in body, keen and penetrating in mind, and ardent in spirit, as he was. In the flesh for but thirty-nine years, his spirit manifests itself now more strongly than ever and we who pay tribute to him can possibly form a truer estimate of his life and work than could his contemporaries.

It is impossible to understand Narendra Nath Dutta without some insight into the influence of Ramakrishna, the saint of India who is said to have given his most beloved disciple, Dutta, the name of *Vivekānanda*, which means "the Bliss of Discrimination." Furthermore, it is necessary to recall certain movements of reform in Indian religion and politics.

Unlike the Christians who accept Jesus as the only incarnation of God on earth, the Hindus believe that divinity appears from time to time among men. By many, Ramakrishna, who was born in Bengal in 1836, is regarded not only as a reincarnation of the divine essence itself, but also of other gods in eastern theology. At any rate, this saintly man who had attained spirituality that was obvious to all who came into contact with him, attached to himself a group of disciples. Among them, the most vital, intellectual and energetic was Dutta, who after Ramakrishna's passing on August 15, 1886, became the leader of an ardent Order of Swamis dedicated to the continuation and spread of the ministry of Ramakrishna. Although Vivekananda never claimed divinity for himself, he accepted Ramakrishna without reservation and dedicated his life to the spread of his master's gospel. Furthermore his own spiritual experiences were had according to his own testimony, through the influence of Ramakrishna. Vivekananda can be likened to the Christian apostle Peter, in that he was the definite choice of his master to carry on a ministry, and he may also be likened to Paul who saw a great light on the road to Damascus and later preached throughout the world.

But what was the situation in India and what was the peculiar message of Ramakrishna? India had drawn the spirit of its religion from the earliest days of Aryan life. Its sacred literature was rich and a hierarchy of divine beings had been evolved. Rituals were followed in temples and numerous sects had sprung up. The essential teaching of Ramakrishna has been that:

1. To find God man must look within and the goal is attained when there is a realization of oneness with God.

2. There is good in all religious systems, they are but

different languages or modes of expression suitable to people of different countries, speech and circumstances. Properly pursued all lead to the one realization. Therefore creeds and rituals are but incidents; the essential helps to realization are love and sincerity.

3. But realization for self, or self-salvation is not enough: there is need to bring others to this realization.

It is obvious that a successful mission along these lines would not only effect the immediate happiness of many in a religious sense, but would lead to widespread social and political reforms. This was understood or at least expressed more clearly by Vivekananda than by his master. Furthermore, Vivekananda's later visit to America strengthened the social objectives of his Order of Swamis. I shall speak of that later.

The little band of apostles formed a permanent organization not unlike that of the Christian St. Francis. They assumed vows of chastity, poverty and good works. They sought mastery over themselves that their souls might be free and unhampered by the fetters of material life or the beclouding influences of sensuous indulgence. They also taught the love of all men and all things as a beginning that would lead to a disinterested love of good in the absolute sense. For a way at least, divine understanding and human affection, working themselves out in service to all, went hand in hand. The final stage was permanent to none of the works or affairs of the world, but absorption into the infinite good—the absolute divinity.

Ramakrishna was more concerned with the absolute and was somewhat distrustful of good works or philanthropies because of the existence of selfish motives in many of those who promoted or took part in them. But Vivekananda, without losing sight of the ultimate goal, worked with men on their own plane, gave much thought and effort to direct ministrations and with these as points of departure, sought to lead men to the rarefied region of oneness with God.

In 1893 the brotherhood delegated Vivekananda to represent them at the Congress of Religions held at Chicago. There had been many in America, acquainted with the Hindu philosophers

and religious beliefs, long before this visit, such as Emerson and others of the transcendental school. The works of American historians, philosophers, psychologists and poets reflected the essential teachings of the Vedas. Walt Whitman also sensed the spirit of India and wrote his poem that begins, "Passage, O soul to India" and ends, "Passage to more than India." But it was Vivekananda, at Chicago, who gave widespread publicity to the doctrine of the divinity in man as preached by Ramakrishna, and the idea of the fundamental oneness of all religions. He popularized and publicized among the many of average intelligence the concepts that had been clearly understood by a smaller group of intellectuals.

So attractive was his personality and so clear and direct were his teachings that he won many adherents who joined the Vedānta groups he established and reaped also the profound respect of others who, while adhering to the doctrines of their own churches, recognized a common ground as described by Vivekananda where all men of goodwill could meet. Indeed, as we look back at the 1893 Congress of Religions the outstanding personality was Vivekananda, and the only permanent outcome was the establishment of Vedānta centres.

Not only did he establish many centres in America, but through his lectures and association with donors, he obtained the means of founding and maintaining monasteries in India. He brought a message to this country but America also taught him many things and provided the means for the development of his work in India along effective lines that would otherwise have been impossible. The mother monastery is at Belur and there are many more besides. In one, at the foot hills of the Himalayas, there is complete retreat from the world, where members of the Order may find seclusion for meditation and the attainment of the super-conscious oneness with the Infinite so vividly described by Ramakrishna. The others are more closely related to the world of men and concern themselves not only with religious pursuits in the pure sense, but also with applied religion manifesting itself in the good works of hospitals, philanthropies and instruction. The

Order has added to its work the conduct of the Ramakrishna Mission with centres of study, devotion and publiction.

There can be no doubt that Vivekananda did much for America and he took back with him to India practical methods of strengthening not only religious life at home, but also social reform. These reforms are not advocated because of some personal or political party advantage, they are the result of an elevation of spirit. They are the forerunners of the disappearance of the objectionable social and political limitations of the caste system which doomed the untouchables to hopeless lives.

Vivekananda came before Gandhi. His teachings are the best foundations of a real national life for India—a life that finds its roots in the ancient teachings of the Vedas, that adapts itself to scientific and educational progress and that will wax strong through a just balance of serenity and action.

There is no difference between the doctrines of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and the words of St. Matthew—"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness ; and all these things will be added unto you."

No people could have had a more sincere leader with a truer message. If the people of India and the people of the world find God and His righteousness within themselves, then indeed will matters of daily life fall into harmonious order and then will be peace.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA, A STUDY IN SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS

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Serious mistakes are committed in our effort to understand Sri Ramakrishna and his teachings in terms of intellect and to draw intellectual philosophy out of his sayings. It has been indeed the practice of ages to thrust an intellectual construction

upon the sayings of the great spiritual teachers, like Krishna, Buddha, Mahomet and Christ, but in this attempt the dignity of their lives and the sublimity of their teachings have not been clearly realized. Intellect is an inefficient organ to understand spiritual truths. Intellect has its forms, and generally human mind finds a relief when it can put the teachings of a great teacher under a construction and it is why, that of matters spiritual, there emerge so many constructions, often varied and diverse, when their profound realizations of spirit are understood by intellect. The human intellect works under limitation, and there rises a great demand in us to get beyond the limitations to enjoy the movement of life and consciousness, in its unfettered freedom and wideness of expression.

Spiritual life is still shrouded in mystery, because man has not still outgrown his conceptual habits of thoughts and cannot read the intimations of spirit independently of thought. The finer ascents of the soul are not accessible to intellect ; intellect even here schematizes and makes forms, but the movement of life in its radiance and fragrance is still missed. Kant has usefully pointed out the limitations of intellect, but he has not gone far beyond the moral values which are true in the realm of will. The finer urge of spirit is not known to Kant. It goes beyond the movement of will or reason. The defect in Kant becomes glaring in the incompatibility between moral life and happiness, and to make up this the hypothesis of a God is introduced. Spiritual life outgrows the implications of moral thought and consciousness and unless we are bold enough to soar beyond, it remains a closed chapter to us. To get a clue to the spiritual mysteries and truths in the movements of thoughts will always end in dismal failure. Spirituality has its own expression and movement, it may inspire our being—intellectual, moral and aesthetic—but it is not solely confined to them ; and its true expression and law cannot be discovered in them. This has been the fundamental teaching of the great spiritual masters.

Sri Ramakrishna is an appeal and inspiration, he makes a unique start and approach. His approach is completely spiritual. His uniqueness lies here. He has this advantage in his nature

and being that he can go beyond at once the mazes and intricacies of thought and start with a spiritual yearning which appears to intellectual men as wild phantasy but which can wake up and move the psychic being in man, disclosing supramental truths beyond the reach of intellect and thought. Ramakrishna is often, therefore, a puzzle to many who want to find logical consistency in place of spiritual felicity in his teachings.

The greatness of Ramakrishna lies in this that he could at once feel the fine dynamism of spirit not known to Kant, functioning through the psychic and cosmic forces. His *sādhana* consists in completely removing consciousness from the scaffoldings of vital and mental life and opening it to the supramental fineness and transcendental reaches. Ramakrishna discovers the natural gravitation of life to spirit. The beauty of mystic life lies in discovering the thread of connection that runs through the heart of existence. It becomes quite easy when this subtle thread of life is realized and its functioning definitely understood through all the grades of existence. The spiritual flame is quite ablaze in the Mystic and in it the doubts of an intellectual mind are vanished. It is this fine spiritual appeal that makes Sri Ramakrishna's life at once an attraction and a wonder.

To all the world Sri Ramakrishna is known to have been a worshipper of Mother-spirit on the basis and on the lines of the Tantras. Doubts are even today entertained by the puritans about the spiritual efficacy of the Tāntric form of worship and discipline. And it is natural, for the Tantras are so vast in their literatures and so diverse in their disciplines and practices that it is not unnatural to entertain a doubt of their efficiency and efficacy as helpful spiritual guides. The truth is that few can approach the disciplines who have not the finest spiritual aspiration and psychic opening. The Tāntric discipline takes its start in this psychic dynamism of our being and unless the psychic being could be brought to the front nobody could with advantage follow the Tāntric path and envisage its complete fulfilment. In the complex composition of man the vital and the mental work along with the psychic and the spiritual, and in most people the vital being, the vital desires and the vital feelings are very strong. They rush

up to the front when a little pressure descends down into the man from his finer being and nature. In such circumstances the intervention of the psychic is helpful and unless the psychic being be active, nature cannot open completely and make an offering of it to the divine. The value of mystical approach lies in submitting all the parts of our being to the influence of spirit. Mysticism makes all the parts of our being elastic and responsive, and unless the grossness of the lower part can be eliminated the higher forces cannot work with advantage, and occupy with full force our complete being and move it with spiritual harmony.

Deep-laid harmony in vital and mental being can be the condition of success in spiritual life. But where the aspiration is deep rising from the total self it naturally moves the whole being in harmony. It starts radiant psychic forces which introduce almost a Divine Peace and a Blessed beatitude. Sri Ramakrishna had to his advantage the intense aspiration for the Divine. He is the personification of this aspiration. It is this God-ward bent and flight of his being that secures for him fine psychic opening and the move of psychic forces. The psychic luminosity can trace the spiritual being in man and its direct connection with the Divine-life that saturates the whole existence with its benign peace. In the Upanishads and in the Yoga Darśana emphasis has been laid down on the concentration on the heartcave as spiritually the most sensitive spot in our being. When the concentration on this centre becomes continuous, a fine current of spiritual force is generated which presses upwards and unites the vital knots of our being allowing the cosmic will and consciousness to play in us. This is the path to the sacred and secret wisdom. It is fully developed in the Tantras. It opens out vast spiritual possibilities and gives immediate awareness and direct vision. It often appears as an arduous task, for our consciousness is centred in the tide of events and gets entangled in the stream of movements. It takes long to rise to that height when it stands freed from all the intricacies of life.

The Vedānta gives the gospel of freedom, and a philosophic understanding of it. But the Tantras show the way to attain it

not by a philosophic dissertation but by a spiritual aspiration and opening. In one way it is more appealing, for it acquaints us with the psychic framework of our being and the subtle knots which impress upon us the sense of individuality and which disappear like a mist before the sun-rise when the cosmic vibrations start in us and direct us from the limited to the wide opening of consciousness initiating radiant feelings, luminous thoughts and vaster knowledge.

The adept passes through a delightful procession of experiences and feelings too deep for words. Such penetration lays bare to us the immanental immensity of the divine life through the orders of existence and strikes us with its sublimities, dignities and beauties at every point of its expression. These ideal experiences are not the only things that attract us while on the path. They are indeed pleasing and attractive but the greatest attraction which almost becomes spontaneous after some time is the realization of the vastness and wideness of our being, its transparency and luminosity. A point may be reached in the realization when we overcome the concentration of our being to a certain area with its play in impulses and feelings and may rise to the height of the cosmic consciousness embracing the totality of existence, gross and subtle, and at the same time far exceeding it in its reaches. Few can stand in equilibrium at this stage for it means a high pressure on the psychic being and almost a complete inhibition of a normal functioning of the faculties and a stupendous silence.

Spiritual consciousness is most interesting, arresting and educative because it gives more than what ordinary intellect can conceive. Its wisdom is beyond all imagination. Its possibilities are infinite. Generally men seek spiritual life because of the inherent demand of a finer and wider existence and the pressure of this demand does not stop unless the widest reach of being is attained where a sense of harmony prevails along with supreme puissance. There is a tendency in us to pass into silence in the dark night of the soul, into that height of consciousness which is cut off from our limited vision. In spiritual life no possibility is thought higher than this for it releases us from the entanglements

of life and affords a clear realization of consciousness freed from all limitations.

Some find access into this height of existence and become dead silent to all the concerns of life and pass into the calm. Others are there, who after the great consummation make a re-orientation of life, to start a new cycle in thought and expression. They can see the Divine purpose in life, the beauty of the illuminated life, its holiness and its majesty. They concentrate themselves to work out the Divine plan in life and defeat the forces of darkness and ignorance which stifle the Divine unfolding, the sharing of the Divine joy of life. The life-lessons of the great spiritual teachers are the secret message of this divine solicitude; for the original limitation of creation is to be set aside, if life is to be divinized. And the sacrifice of the great spiritual teachers of their lives for the uplift of mankind exhibits that there is in the divine life a constant effort to eliminate the inertia and stir life in such a way as can best imbibe the divine freshness into it and make the divine life manifested in Earth consciousness.

This task is really reserved for a few elects. Many make adventures in spiritual life and find in the loneliness of contemplation the higher and loftier ranges of being and consciousness open unto them ; the delight and the joyousness become so absorbing that they do not allow them to be disturbed in their silence and become completely hidden in the mood of thought. They become for ever buried in the inner temple of silence.

There are a few indeed, who are privileged enough to enter into the vortex of life to elevate humanity and to scatter the divine peace and the divine aroma of life by radiating a spiritual current from them. They scatter light, joy, peace and power. They descend from the tower of silence to meet a definite problem in a particular epoch of civilization.

There is great joy and relief in individual redemption. There is greater blessedness in the liberation of the collective humanity. This is the divine plan. With the growth of spiritual susceptibilities the plan becomes evident, for the law of spiritual affinity

consciously or unconsciously helps the uplift of the whole humanity whenever the earth-conditions become such as can react to the ingress of spiritual force. The lives of the great Masters in spirituality are interesting studies illustrating the great spiritual truth that humanity through its pangs, trials and sufferings gets occasional glimpses into the divine solicitude for its finer spiritual evolution—the God appears also as a struggling God against the forces of darkness and in the struggle the most human side of His nature is manifested. The first one appeals by the depth of wisdom, the second one by the moving picture of the struggle of God against the enveloping darkness and ignorance and there lies the hope of the whole humanity. Humanity need only to understand the sublimity of this conception to feel its spiritual potentiality and attractiveness and realize the beauty of struggle for instilling the divine aroma of life. The first movement in spiritual life may be to taste the blessed privilege of freedom and unbounded expression of being, the second movement in spirit is the expression of divine love and sacrifice for the suffering humanity.

Spirituality is an active force in life which is more than of academical interest, because it is the most effectively shaping force which consciously or unconsciously guides us in cosmic affairs. It brings down higher inspiration and fills the earth-consciousness with them. A spiritual force takes us unawares but spreads its influence most gently but surely. This accounts for the tremendous influence which a spiritual genius imparts during his life time. He often energizes and guides the thoughts of generations to come. What is more, he creates psychic atmosphere which unconsciously helps the fine formation of spirituality. The greatest redeeming feature of a spiritual genius is that he unconsciously directs the thought-formations of ages to come. However original people may think themselves, their thoughts are indeed comments upon the sayings and expressions of spiritual genius. We need eyes to see and receptivity to feel their influence. And it is indeed amazing that they do more by their personal influence than by their teaching. Because they are centres which can directly visualize the divine order of things and feel inspired to help humanity. The divine influence works through them directly. They can create a

spiritually charged area. The influence of a Buddha, a Kṛishṇa, a Mahomet and a Christ has been unmistakably and immeasurably greater than the influence of a Kant, or a Fichte, because they are living in constant touch not with the fringe but with the very centre of cosmic consciousness.

Indeed, because of the difference in the responsiveness of the parts of being, the spiritual expression in the lives of the great teachers has not been uniform. The concrete spiritual life, therefore, exhibits apparent differences. They are not really differences, they are matters of accents and emphasis. Love, knowledge, compassion and power are the inestimable privileges of the divine life, and when the chords of being are vibrated, they become the natural possessions of the seeker.

In India intellectual philosophy has not been separated from spiritual philosophy. The great teachers of thought have been the great teachers of spirituality. Philosophy, rightly understood, is the search and the discovery of spirit. There is a great demand in man to achieve immediate awareness and feel directly the movement of spirit. We can hardly, therefore, confine ourselves to dialectics of thought. The divergence that is felt between philosophy and life in the West is not felt in India. The great teachers do not only illumine thought, they also inspire life. In the texture of our being, thought and life are set together and in the unfoldment they help each other for thought is the reflection of life. Whenever thought has been cut off from the inspiration of life it suffers in elasticity. Even where the men of spiritual genius have not given out a systematic thought, they have influenced life and started finer oscillations of being which help direct and immediate realization. A spiritual force is a tremendous influence upon life and helps its unfoldment in such a way as can in the final reach vouchsafe the transcendental truth. It is this silent influence of the soul and the divine magnetism that differentiate the truly spiritual genius from the leaders of thought. The passionate zeal of the men of thought often stops with system-construction but more often the forces which really give power and influence to spiritual genius remain inactive in them. It is this mysterious influence of their personality which explains the

initiation of new life current which spiritual men usher in. They have the advantage of seeing the divine forces at work through the different layers of existence and they can rise so high and grow so much spiritually sensitive as to be able to catch the spiritual currents that emit from the centre and be ultimately identical with it. This is their special privilege by their special fitness. Spiritual geniuses have, therefore, before them a living influence which in many cases escapes the notice of great thinkers, for they cannot rise above the logical mind to invite the kindly way of light that does not deceive. They not only receive the divine forces but they transmit the divine influence through human society. Sri Ramakrishna scatters such a silent influence.

But where and to what end? He is the forerunner and inspirer of a new consciousness that has become imperatively necessary today for the fostering of a new understanding, the initiation of a spiritual force, the awakening of a wide catholicity in spirit which could see the beauty of every faith and realize its spiritual potentiality. To Ramakrishna there has been only one gospel of faith. Faith is the stirring of the integral consciousness to realize the commonalty of spirit in its widest extension and the deepest intensity. It is the impelling force to rise above all narrow considerations of life and to invite life in its redeeming grace and uplifting influence. Faith is a moving power and in an age when the forces of different civilizations are meeting one another, an understanding and inspiration of the kind that Ramakrishna left for us is greatly helpful to the cementing up of the differences that divide us and to the realization of an integral divinity in integral humanity. Humanity's finest aspirations and noblest hopes have been almost identical. It has been left to Sri Ramakrishna to go through the whole orbit and circuit of spiritual life, not in its abstract philosophy but in its concrete making up and declare that the spiritual composition of our being is identical. The differences in creeds are more superficial than real and they rise from the traditional acceptances and timidity of our nature and its refusal to go through the whole range of life and its experience.

Spiritual demand and its concrete expression in every age

have not been the same, for the formative forces in the epochs of civilization have been different—each age has its special spiritual necessity and time-force has its unique individuality. Though the Truths of the spirit are widely universal, still every one of them does not get identical expression all the time, for in the concrete life, all of them cannot be equally active. And if one follows the evolution of spiritual ideas through the advent of great teachers, the truth stands revealed that spiritual ideas find progressively effective expression through the course of civilization, for whatever the spirit may be in its transcendence, it has varied phases of expressions. Sri Ramakrishna represents the force of spiritual harmonization by recognizing that the living faiths have the same aspiration and the same objective—the active union with God. He seems to have stressed the universal element in spiritual life by freeing faiths from their creeds which instead of providing us with true spiritual fervour in its widest commonalty introduces mental constructions which can only touch the fringe of spiritual life, but cannot enter into its central reality. The note of division becomes prominent when the spirituality is sought to be understood, but not actually felt, or lived. Spirit is the essence of our being and in its ascent through the wider stretches of consciousness, it can realize its own play, its notes and its vaster amplitudes, for spiritual life not only impresses us with a wider mental horizon, but actually passes beyond the mentalized consciousness and acquaints us with our potential divinity. Nay, in all forms of spirituality, the limitations of our mental being are transcended. The touch of spirit gives us cosmic feelings, cosmic intuitions and cosmic movement. Spirituality is not a study of ordinary psychology and many confusions and conflicts in spiritual life can be set aside, if the spiritual reactions can be studied in themselves without the imposition of the mental laws upon them. Ramakrishna is a study in the fine dynamism of spirit energizing the mental and the vital life without sharing their limitations.

Spiritual truths lie often dormant in our consciousness and the fellowship with teachers impresses upon us the value and the presentation of a particular expression. Naturally when a dispensation is established, attention is narrowed down to the person and

his memory but not the influence that he generates and the teachings that he imparts. The Church Universal is lost in the master individual. It is indeed difficult to separate the teaching from the medium through which the truth becomes dynamic, but unless we are awake to truths which are more actively fruitful in enlarging our consciousness and in widening our being, the fondness and adoration to the memory of a master has the effect of gradually directing our energies into questionable channels. Churches in the East and the West have hardly been able to save themselves from this kind of influence and have not been able to invite the living inspiration from every faith and realize the great truth of the Church eternal. The specific notes of every faith add to the richness of life if they are properly received and appreciated, for religious ideas are expressions of some truths deeply laid in some parts of our being. This universal sense and this wide acceptance are generally lost upon us if our being is not spiritually well strung, for it is not infrequent that some parts of our being make response and some other parts remain irresponsive. A theoretical and an academical acceptance of the truths of faiths can give a momentary illumination and an intellectual expansion but this does not carry us enough to generate that sympathy which can inwardly enjoy the beauties of faiths, the richness of life and the inspiring influence of great teachers. Sri Ramakrishna demonstrates the great truth that every faith has its saving power, each its divine inspiration, a spiritual attraction and beauty. Their living inspirations can be felt if we follow them to the end. It is not only that Ramakrishna felt in actual life this redeeming power of faiths and envisaged the invisible but the eternal church of God and the eternal religion of spirit in place of denominational churches and their credos. Ramakrishna lived to realize this truth and passed it on to the future humanity that it might foster a nobler understanding and a spiritual friendship and save humanity from confusion and from the forces of fanaticism. Ramakrishna has given the gospel of spirit more than any theological creed or any philosophical theory. He stressed the movement of spirit and its expression through the finer rhythm of the heart, the diviner movement of the will and through the luminous intuition of intellect. Spirit takes possession of every organ of the human mind;

and because it took possession of the full being of Ramakrishna, therefore, that the spiritual expression in him had been varied—there were deep intensity of feeling and spiritual emotion verging on a psychic inequilibrium, and easy access into the transcendental reaches of consciousness, and a ready will to serve the suffering divinity in the shape of man. Every chord of his being used to vibrate with spiritual currents but his fragile body was too weak for the spiritual surging. Ramakrishna opened the flood-gate of spiritual currents and the whole humanity today is enjoying the fruits of his *tapasyā*. Surely the men of God do not live alone for themselves, they are instruments which remind us of the living presence of God in our heart and the possibility of divine life and lift up the course of evolution to a higher plane. Men of God always live for this consummation.

THE ADVENT OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

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(Original in Bengali)

পরমহংসদেব শ্রীশ্রীরামকৃষ্ণের শতবার্ষিকী জন্মতিথিতে এই সর্বধর্ম-সম্মেলনের অধিবেশন ভারতের ইতিহাসে এক অভূতপূর্ব ঘটনা। ইহা ভারতীয় অধ্যাত্ম রাজ্যে এক নবজীবনের আরম্ভ। হিন্দু, মুসলমান, খ্রীষ্টিয়ান, পারসিক প্রভৃতি বিভিন্ন ধর্মাবাদের অধিনায়কগণ একই মঞ্চে একই উদ্দেশ্যে মিলিত হইয়া স্ব স্ব ধর্মের স্বরূপ ব্যাখ্যান করিয়া বিশ্বমানবের মহামানবতার চরম লক্ষ্য কি তাহা সভ্য মানবের মনে অঙ্কিত করিবার অকপটভাবে এমন বিরাট সম্মেলন এমন সুশৃঙ্খলতার সহিত সম্পাদন করিতে পারেন, এরূপ কল্পনা এ ভারতে আর কখনও হয় নাই। সুতরাং এই মহা সম্মেলনে সনাতনধর্মাবলম্বী হিন্দুর প্রাণের কথাটা কি তাহা সংক্ষেপে বলিবার জন্ত আমি যদি কিঞ্চিৎ প্রযত্ন করি তাহা যে অসাময়িক হইবে, ইহা আমি মনে করি না।

হিন্দুর ধর্ম, হিন্দুর সমাজ, হিন্দুর সভ্যতা স্মরণাতীত কাল হইতে এক অপরিবর্তনশীল সুদৃঢ় ভিত্তির উপর প্রতিষ্ঠিত ছিল, আছে ও থাকিবে। সেই মহা ভিত্তির নাম—ঔপনিষদ ব্রহ্মাধ্বয়বাদ। পরিদৃশ্যমান

অনন্ত প্রকারের ভেদ, অসংখ্য বৈচিত্র্যময় এই প্রপঞ্চের মধ্যে, ইহার আদিতে, ইহার অন্তে সকল প্রকার ভেদের, সকল প্রকার বৈচিত্র্যের একমাত্র আধার বা আলম্বন যে বাস্তব বস্তু সর্বদা প্রকাশমান—বাহার নাম নাই, বাহার রূপ নাই, অথচ সকল নামে সকল রূপে তাহারই সত্তা পরিস্ফুটিত হয়, তাহাই উপনিষদ্ প্রতিপাদ্য ব্রহ্ম, তাহাই তোমার আমার বিশ্বব্রহ্মাণ্ডের সকল প্রাণীর আত্মা, তাহাকে না জানিয়া থাকার নাম বন্ধ, তাহাকে নিজের সাক্ষাৎ অনুভবের বিময় করার নামই মুক্তি। তাহাকে যতক্ষণ জানিতে না পারা যায় ততক্ষণই আমি তুমি। আমার তোমার ভাবিতে ভাবিতে মানুষ সংসার-সাগরে পতিত হয়, চির শান্তির মধ্যে খোরতর অশান্তির সৃষ্টি করে, আপনাকে পর করে, মানুষে মানুষে সমাজে সমাজে জাতিতে জাতিতে ভেদ-কলহ-যুদ্ধরূপ অশান্তির দাবানল সৃষ্টি করে এবং তাহাতেই জন্মিয়া পুড়িয়া হাহাকার করে। তাহাকে বুঝা ও বুঝিয়া পাওয়ার নামই মানব-জীবনের চরম বা পরম পুরুষার্থ; তাহাই ভারতের উপনিষদ আত্মা। ইহাই হইল ভারতের বাণী। এই বাণীকে নূতনভাবে সময়ের উপযোগী করিয়া ভারতকে বুঝাইয়া এবং ভারতকে দ্বার করিয়া সমগ্র পৃথিবীর অজ্ঞানমূলক দেহাত্মাভিমান বিড়ম্বিত, দ্বন্দ্বিত ও অশান্ত মানবজাতিকে বুঝাইয়া সকল প্রকার বন্ধ হইতে মুক্ত করিবার জন্য শ্রীভগবান্ পরমহংসদেব-রূপ ধরিয়া দেখা দিয়াছিলেন। তাঁহার সেই বিশ্বধর্ম-সম্বয়ের মূর্ত প্রতীক ভগবান্ শ্রীরামকৃষ্ণ পরমহংসদেবের পাদপদ্ম-যুগলে আমার কোটি কোটি প্রণাম।

(English Rendering)

This Parliament of Religions held in connection with the Birth-Centenary of Paramahansa Sri Ramakrishna is an event unprecedented in the annals of India. It heralds the dawn of a new life in the spiritual domain of the country. That the leaders of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and other faiths could sincerely meet on the same platform for a common purpose and hold such a gigantic Convention in so orderly a fashion, expounding the real nature of the religions they professed, in order to impress upon the minds of civilized men the ultimate goal of humanity at large, was a thing undreamt of in India. I, therefore, do not consider it inopportune to make a humble attempt to indicate briefly the theme that is dearest to the heart of the orthodox Hindu.

Hindu religion, Hindu society and Hindu culture have from time immemorial stood, as they do and will stand, on an unshakable adamant foundation. That great foundation is called the *Brahma-advaya-vāda* (the Monism of Brahman) taught in the Upanishads. Behind this visible universe with its infinite diversities and differentiations, at its beginning, middle and end, as the background or substratum of these countless differences, lies that Reality which is ever manifest, which has neither name nor form, but which alone is manifested through all names and forms. It is the Brahman inculcated in the Upanishads. It is your soul and mine as also that of all creatures in the universe. To live in ignorance of It is bondage, and to realize It intuitively is liberation. So long as we do not know It, we are in the realm of 'you' and 'me'. Engrossed in this thought of 'yours' and 'mine', man falls into the ocean of birth and death, creates dire unrest in the midst of eternal peace, makes of one's self an alien entity, raises the distracting forest-fire of differences, quarrels and fights between man and man, community and community, nation and nation, and being scorched in it, sets up a howl of lamentation.

To know and realize Brahman—the Ātman taught in the Upanishads of India—is the highest goal of human life. This is the message of India. To teach this message to India in a new form adapted to the needs of the times, and through India to human beings all over the world, who on account of ignorance have the misfortune to identify themselves with the body and suffer torment and worry, and thus lead them to freedom from all kinds of bondage, God appeared on earth as Paramahansa Deva. My countless salutations to the holy feet of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, the visible symbol of the Lord ushering in a synthesis of the religions of the world!

CHAPTER VII \

SECTION V

Religion and Philosophy

THE MESSAGE OF TRUTH

ATUL CHANDRA BANERJEE

Baranagore, Calcutta

The diversity and inequality in the world of religions that baffles today the thinkers of all nations will, in reality, cease to exist, if they only care to dive into the very depths of religion itself. The variations characterize only the outer shell, the dead formalities and stony conventions of religion, which prevail in different climes and cultures. On closer contact with the Spirit, on perfect realization of Truth, this co-efficient in the angle of vision eliminates itself, the soul is emancipated and Truth becomes self-evident, self-revealed in all its fullness and glory, permeating all forms though by itself formless, and taking up a thousand and one names though by itself beyond nomenclature. The seeker then grasps the Supreme Reality that is one in all. It is one and the same Truth after which all the various communities and sects—Hindus, Christians, Moslems and Buddhists—are, consciously or unconsciously seeking for ever.

A hundred years have rolled by since the message of universal harmony emanated from the divine personality of Sri Ramakrishna. The world is well aware that the same message found expression, and we dare say, is still vocalized, and, let us hope, will be for ever resounded throughout the ages to come, in hundreds and thousands of seers of this blessed land.

This same message of final and supreme Peace, lit up by the effulgence of self-revealing Truth and inspired by the vital spark of Life at its source, found vivid and exquisite expression from the lips of another of India's glorious hierarchy of seers, Sri Sri Satyadev, who lived about a score of years ago in the heart of this very city of Calcutta. Religion did not deaden into cold sectarianism in his hands. He sought in his unique way to harmonize the conflicting diversities in the world of faiths and made a rare contribution to the cause of the advancement of

Truth by evolving a religion in the realization of the Oneness, Sameness, Immutability of Truth—a point where all the tributaries of world-faiths will fain agree to meet and coalesce. He arrived at the fundamental unity that would keep all religions together. He set up “a common church for mankind, a universal pattern to which every act of worship and aspiration must conform.” Though the mortal remains of this superman be no longer with us, his inspiring message and high ideal will ever lead us on the path of peace.

THE LIFE OF DETACHMENT

PROF. HARIMOHAN BHATTACHARYYA

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The conception of man's spiritual goal has varied in various times and climes in accordance with his environment, temperament and culture, but amidst these variables what has persisted all through them as a constant factor, is his sense of detachment from what is not truly his own spiritual self. If man's spiritual ideal is admitted to be his self-fulfilment and if this self-fulfilment is his fullest realization of what his true self is, then such self-fulfilment presupposes a necessary self-alienation from what is other than its true nature. And this self-alienation of the self from what it is not, is what goes by the common name of detachment (*vairāgya*); and the theme of my discourse will be this life of detachment which has been recognized as the common propaedeutic to man's spiritual goal by all the great religious teachers of the world. True indeed that here again in the manner, intensity and ultimate significance of this life of detachment there is a marked degree of divergence noticeable among them, and though it is not possible for me in this short discourse to bring out in full the nice nuances in the spiritual discipline involved in it, it will be my endeavour to present before you their main implications in general outline.

The Rishis of the Upanishads saw and felt that the souls of men are of God, are in God and have come from God. They are

immortal and their immortality (*amṛitatva*) and freedom (*svārājya*) constitute their true essence. They are sons of God, sons of immortality (*amṛitasya putrāḥ*). What clouds and covers their true essence is their life of the non-soul, their life of the body and flesh with their excrescences, their life of attachment with what is not theirs. It is the life of the object, the life of emotions and desires, passions and prejudices that despiritualizes the soul. The soul seeks to find a false fulfilment in this life of objectivity but it brings a spiritual death in its train and not immortality which is its essence. The opening *mantra* of the *Īśa Upanishad* reminds us, as if with the finger raised, that in this world of objects which is permeated by the Divine, every one of us has to live in it as if he were out of it, guided by a sense of *tyāga* or detachment from what is not his own. The *Kaivalya Upanishad* tells us how Brahmā initiates *Ṛishi Aśvalāyana* into the efficacy of detachment leading to the attainment of the essence of the spiritual life by her unequivocal insistence on the same principle of detachment. The *tyāga* or self-abnegation, be it noted, does not carry with it, as is often wrongly conceived, an idea of anything like loss (*nāśa*) or unmitigable emptying of the soul reducing it to vacuum, but rather it suggests the attainment of the fullest stature it is capable of. It is not destruction but re-fulfilment, not vacuum but plentitude. The soul has to abdicate all that has overgrown upon it to make room for all that is its own—for all that it has forfeited in its transactions of the object-world.

It is the veering back of the soul to its own moorings ; it is thus negative only in appearance, but supremely positive in its essence ; and this is the inner significance of the life of detachment or renunciation, whatever you may call it.

Jesus the Christ said, " Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Mark the word ' pure.' What else is this purity of heart than the abnegation of the lower self to make room for the higher? What else is it than that receptivity of the individual self for all that would give it its fullest spirituality which is its birthright? Look to what Jesus Christ said to Nicodemus: " Give up all that thou hast and follow me."

Nicodemus dared not and fled. We are all aware in the heart of our hearts how most of us belong to the class of Nicodemus who dare not and flee. We are all aware that the things we cling to will not cling to us unto the last, because they are not of us. There come moments—rare auspicious moments—in the midst of our enjoyments of the objective world, when we are warned by the spirit within us that what we do covet are not worth coveting. But this warning voice of the spirit in man is drowned under the louder insistence of the biological and psychical aspects of his being, which are no part of his true self, but which make up his lower nature. The Lord Buddha reiterates the same thing to his disciples when he encounters, on the Gr̥dhra-kūṭa hill of Rājgir, some Niganthas or Jaina monks practising severe austerities. With the characteristic directness of feeling of a great seer he talks, out of the fullness of his heart, on the necessity of the life of suffering and tribulation (*dukkha*) for the attainment of *Sukha* or *Nirvāṇa*.¹ He tells his disciples if *Sukhan* were attainable by *sukha* (material happiness), then the reigning king Bimbisāra rolling in all manner of earthly happiness must have attained *Nirvāṇa*. The *Dhammapada*² says: "Bhikkhu, empty this boat! If emptied, it will go quickly; cut off from passion and hatred thou wilt go to *Nirvāṇa*."

The words of Mahāvīra³ bristle with injunctions for the attainment of spiritual life by dissociation from all that is of the *pudgal*: (matter) or object-world. The object-world is a drag to the soul's attainment of its own *svabhāva* or essence, and it is by a life of *saṃvara* that it can recover its lost glory. The Jaina saint Kumdakumdhāchārya remarks, "If the soul gets back its own *svabhāva*, its own true nature,—all its *abhāva* or otherness and deficiency is gone—it is then quite free from the bodies and is indestructible."

Without multiplying the sayings of the great teachers of the world we can sufficiently realize how the true spirit of detachment lies at the foundation of all spiritual life. Christ's ideal of detachment has lost its real original significance for the people of the

¹ *Majjhimanikāya*, I.2-4.

² XXV.369.

³ Schubring's *Worte Mahavira*.

West who have under the weight of the objective life have turned that ideal into the greater and greater fulfilment of the self in the object-world, evolving morality and religion which find their satisfaction not so much in the inwardness of the spirit as in its outward expansion. With the exception of a few mystical writers like Eckhart and Jacob Boehme and perhaps Spinoza, this has been the general tendency of Western thought and culture. The life of detachment preached by the Lord Buddha, insisting as it does on the dissolution of the individual physical centre has, we think, the apparent difficulty in satisfying the demands of a true spiritual life, though it has amply compensated this deficiency by socializing the individual will which has to realize itself in the service of humanity. The Jaina ideal seems to us less erring on the side of its conception of the being of the self, but it is more rigoristic and individualistic in its conception of the spiritual life, in so far as there seems to be little or no provision for social service and so far as the aspirant is to look exclusively to his own personal uplift by complete self-abnegation, not refraining in some cases even from suicide.

Now the life of detachment which is prescribed with no less emphasis in Hindu religion as the indispensable *propaedeutic* to spiritual realization has, as already observed, more positive than negative outlook. The recovery of the true self lies rather in its discovery than in its death—in its retirement from the object-world which is not its true essence, into its more enriched inner being, but not altogether forgetful at the same time of its duties to other selves, which form part of the object-world. The conception of the *jīvanmukta* which is reached undoubtedly by a process of the discipline of detachment is not without its elements of disinterested social service (*lokānugraha*). This ideal of detached life which has been the guiding principle of the Hindu aspirant since the Upanishadic age has found its rejuvenated expression in the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, the Centenary of whose birth we have assembled here to celebrate. That the inwardness of being coupled with the outward *lokavyavahāra* and *lokānugraha* or social service should constitute the essence of a true aspirant, has been amply demonstrated in his *Kathāmṛta*,

though the emphasis on the need of service to mankind was stronger in the life and work of Swami Vivekananda, his foremost disciple, who saw and felt such a need to be more urgent in view of the demands of the society of his time. The true life of detachment thus is not negative as is wrongly viewed but more positive in its outlook, in so far as it leads ultimately to the realization of the spirit in man which brings in its train sacrifice for others who are in reality at one with the spirit of the aspirant. The object, viewed as an object, will necessarily bind the spirit in man to the narrow immediacy of the object, but it is detachment from the immediate object that can really bring back the universality, divinity and immortality which constitute the essence of the spirit.

INWARD VERACITY IN ITS RELIGIOUS SENSE

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The spiritual mood of inward veracity differs greatly in degree, and can in fact only be judged with regard to great varieties of character. That is to say, we may begin with a man's honest desire to safeguard himself against self-deceptions and also to allow no intention on the part of others to mislead or confuse him or prevail over him, and end with the passionate determination to vindicate and defend, even at the risk of his life, what he holds to be true. In all these attitudes of mind, however varied in degree and quality, the intellectual question, "What is true?"—"What is real?"—will always play its part.

Nowhere is the soul more deeply concerned in this endeavour to get at the real substance of truth than in a man's striving to find a religious form that will satisfy his mind and give a comprehensive significance to his life. This struggle is by no means confined to individual souls, but takes place also in the mutual influencing and self-encouraging of men of the same religious faith who sometimes understand and sometimes misunderstand one another,

i.e. who believe themselves to be in agreement and who are yet only apparently congenial.

If even people closely connected by the same creed may be in doubt as to the moods and feelings of one another and exposed to grave errors, how is it then possible to characterize religious life as such at all? Rather than attempt to produce proofs, deductions and the like, let us try to reduce the problem to its simplest form. We all judge the religious sense of other people according to the possibilities of comparison which we find between our way and their way of feeling. This way of feeling we assess according to its intensity, its artistic expression and the moral life of the people concerned. To this we add the conviction that religious feelings would under all circumstances preserve a certain original independence in the spiritual life of man, or that a predisposition to religious life exists which cannot be explained as arising from other primary forces. Consequently, even if religious cults undergo developments of the most varied kinds, even if they be associated to a high degree with ideas wholly strange to us, we yet maintain that there does exist a fundamental fact in the nature of religious feelings. If, as has recently been claimed, faith, hope and charity exist even in primitive religions, then we should be able to produce empirical proofs as well in support of our view.

Such predispositions, however, cannot simply be termed individual tendencies: they are at the same time an integral part of social life and cannot be detached from it, without giving rise to serious conflicts. We must admit that the Arabian philosophers in the Middle Ages, and later the earliest period of English enlightenment and the champions of religious toleration believed that there was to be found in the human heart a divine original text of what is true in a religious sense, and imagined religious development to be free from any other influence apart from that of Nature herself; whereas the later philosophers of the age of enlightenment, especially the French, in the second half of the eighteenth century, took the opposite course and made man's attitude to religion appear to be particularly dependent on education, perhaps more so than all the other forms of his intellectual life.

If we call to mind the philosophy of Spinoza, we find that in

it the love of God is declared to be man's greatest possession. Accordingly only he obeys the divine law who seeks to love God. One of the principal commandments is that we should be just and love our neighbours. How would that be possible outside the bounds of some form of human society? How could a man serve God outside the bounds of human society? Consequently, however deeply the religious predisposition may be rooted in the nature of the individual, it could not, according to this system, be developed or formed outside the bounds of social life.

The histories of philosophy and literature teach us to regard Spinozism also as a kind of frame of mind and spiritual mood. Other philosophical systems, intrinsically related to Spinozism, give greater prominence to the nature and significance of this mood-content. And if we proceed to the example of the English Spinoza, namely, Francis Herbert Bradley (1846-1924), we shall be able to notice this fact most clearly. Bradley, too, was of the view that the emotions give us a positive notion of a non-relational unity (*Appearance and Reality*, II, Chap. xxvii). Only an infinite being can be completely harmonious. If we strive emotionally towards the infinite, we resemble the river hurrying down to the sea: the ego loses itself in love.

No matter whether our spiritual mood is the consequence and result of our participation in a religious cult, that is to say, is a consequence and result of our social life, or whether it appears as the expression of emotional intensification, the spiritual complex can make itself the object of its own analysis, can become the object of a psychological explanation, in order to reveal the intellectual aspect of what is felt and desired.

Behind such an effort there will be a passionate determination to get at the truth, a determination which will increase more and more in intensity, affect the whole personality, and in fact in the end completely absorb it. Obviously a man then not only distinguishes between himself and his own more real self, but places himself in contrast with the religious community from which he has gone forth. The determination to get at the truth is then a striving towards detachment and individualization, in a sense even towards isolation.

From time immemorial there have been men whose inward insincerity has kept pace with their outward insincerity. They proclaim metaphysics, they do not believe in it, cannot believe in it, because it is absurd, repugnant, and an offence against even the most elementary good taste. The most grotesque logical discords can no more deflect them from their purpose than a fist banged down on a piano can disconcert a deaf and dumb man. In order to deceive the people their abysmal untruthfulness leads them to feign, among other things, a theological mentality which was certainly never theirs and of the complete worthlessness of which they are themselves fully aware. All religions have not only opposed such conduct, but have produced examples of the contrary against it. Philosophy, from the earliest times, has characterized inward as well as outward lack of veracity, has in fact condemned the mere pretence of an idealistic conception of the world, an ideal sentiment, because at heart only mean avarice actually existed. Sri Ramakrishna, too, expresses himself in like manner on this point. He did not want to learn Sanskrit, because the priests, although they were able to speak about reality and appearance, Brahman and *Māyā*, the salvation of the soul by entrance into the one *Ātman*, in practice attached more importance to worldly pleasures. Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) declared that philosophers were for that reason alone the most wretched of all creatures, if they pretended to teach wisdom only in order to earn a living. Colerus could devise no nobler memorial for the great Spinoza than the words, "*Spinoza erat nullius rei nec simulator nec dissimulatur*," i.e. he pretended nothing and concealed nothing.

A retrospective survey of religions, or more exactly, of religions at certain periods in the history of the world, enables us to estimate the value of participation or non-participation in the ceremonies of a cult as indications of a religious disposition. But in a cult dogmas and articles of faith are revealed. Max Müller, in his work *Ramakrishna, his Life and Sayings* (London and Bombay, 1898), says that to the great Reformer the image-worship, which the majority of priests performed in a mechanical fashion, was a matter of the most solemn seriousness. Whenever

he prayed to his tutelary goddess, the terrible, almighty Kālī, She appeared for the time being before his mind's eye, and he contemplated the symbolical meaning of Her attributes.

It will not be necessary to examine the religions known to us with a view to discovering what their symbols express, in order to declare that the attribution of a meaning to such symbols, and also the origin of the dogmas, are traceable back to fear, to human desires, hopes, spiritual moods, in a word to man himself. To whatever people or age we turn, we shall always find different gods corresponding to different desires and feelings; it may be that nature and environment, or that the native country in the sense of the people, is responsible for this variety. All peoples have their national gods. The hymns of the *Rig-Veda* make us acquainted in India with Indra, the god of thunderstorms, Agni, the god of fire; Bṛihaspati, the Lord of the Brahman Vishṇu and Ushas. Naturally the people believe that they worship their gods in the proper way, that is to say, in such a way that they may expect from them the fulfilment of their desires, national as well as personal. Indra is a god of battles, endowed with power to perform warlike deeds: if, by means of the proper word, the suitable hymn, the adequate sacrifice, he is not only supplicated, but in a sense placed under an obligation, then he will not refuse his help in approaching battles, i.e., he will be a god of victory.

Only gradually, in the course of time, did the personalities of the old Indian gods recede in favour of the idea of a non-anthropomorphic, independent, cosmic principle. A process admitting of a similar psychological explanation takes place in many civilizations, if only they have lasted long enough.

If we regard the advance of Islam into North Africa and Southern Europe as a reaction against the wars of conquest of the old Roman Empire, then Allah appears as a god of victory and the divine incorporation of the dreams of the Arab tribes united by Mohammed. In the course of centuries, after victories which carried Islam as far as the north of Spain, contacts with Christians and Jews made more and more for a more independent and spiritualized conception of God, without, however, laying bare the fundamental psychological motives of earlier Islam.

In the consciousness of European Christians of today the idea of a philosophical identification of God with the expression of truth is at the same time combined with an elucidation of the psychological basis of the belief in the value of dogmas and ceremonial forms of worship. Let us remember the mystery of the Incarnation, as L. Feuerbach describes it, namely that God is of the nature of the heart: "The heart can only turn to the heart; it finds consolation in itself alone in its own nature!" We pursue the same train of thought, when we explain the mystery of the suffering God. Feuerbach says, "The heart is the source, the essence of all suffering. A being without suffering is a being without a heart. The mystery of the suffering God is therefore the mystery of feeling; a suffering God is a feeling, sentimental God. But the axiom, 'God is a feeling being,' is only the religious way of expressing the axiom, 'feeling is in its very nature divine!'" It follows from this that religion is the reflection of human life in itself. If this is accepted, then the following mysteries can be traced back to the nature of man himself; the Trinity, the logos, the world-creative principle in God, the omnipotence of the spirit, i.e. of prayer, faith, miracles, the resurrection, the personal God, personal immortality, etc. In all religions prayer is one of the most impressively efficacious features; for it demands of God nothing less than an interference in the causal sequence of events, and in fact makes Him get at variance with the laws governing the course of nature. To man, when he prays, God's arbitrary power is boundless, i.e., the omnipotence of God's benevolence is to man identical with the omnipotence of the desires expressed in his prayers. Here we find one of the most important roots of our problem of inward veracity. Fear of the "natural" course of things comes into conflict with the belief in the compelling power of prayer. What is more powerful—the inherent force of the course of events, or the longing of the heart? The New Testament demands of us that we should worship God in the spirit and in truth; modern European philosophers, e.g., Campanella, speak of man's having a share in the original divine attributes: power, wisdom and love; and finally Descartes, the 'father' of modern philosophy, says that God should actually be

worshipped as a veracity. The veracity of God gives us therefore a guarantee for the reality of the external world.

If veracity, the perpetual determination to pretend nothing, is founded in the character or nature of God, if it is here that we must look for the source of all certainty, then the striving after veracity is divine. That being so, the question of acknowledging the alternative between the omnipotence of our heart's desires expressed in prayer and of the natural course of events forces us to clarify our own mental attitude. We must now know what is true, what is real.

We cannot define reality simply as the coherence of our perceptions and incorporate the real into this coherence, but rather we must express the perceptions gained in one sphere by means of others belonging to a different one and find a mathematical form in which to express this. The mathematical expression will tend more and more to take on an abstract form; but still it will enhance the unity of our knowledge of the external world. The times are past when the astronomer had simply to calculate and explain the position and course of the stars, or when the physicist, the chemist, in other words the scientist in the laboratory, merely explained the phenomena and processes that presented themselves to him in experiments and definite observations. Today the exact sciences can be regarded as being indissolubly bound up with one another. Temperatures, such as we shall never be able to produce, reveal themselves to us in the interior of the stars. Even through the most powerful of telescopes these stars can be seen merely as specks, and yet we know at least as much about what is going on in their interiors as we do about the processes on the surface of the sun. We apply this knowledge also to that gained in the laboratory, just as conversely we make use on a cosmic scale of our practical knowledge gained close at hand. Astronomy does not only merge into astrophysics, but obviously into general physics and chemistry as well. Over all this unity a new mathematico-physico-logical law now obtains: probability has now become a general physical peculiarity of all things (*in abstracto*).

For thousands of years people were wont to say that there was nothing new under the sun, and such vague and highly

popular phrases have even been repeated, and emphatically repeated, by philosophers. It is certainly true that in all philosophizing the "right" combination of fixed and settled meanings of designations plays an important part, but does that warrant our subscribing to F. Max Müller's opinion: "All philosophy can be called a war between the old and the new meanings of words" (*Das Denken im Lichte der Sprache*, Leipzig, 1888, p. 557)? No, it is not really a controversy over words; entirely new ways and possibilities of thought and entirely new methods remould man's mental attitude.

Centuries ago, i.e. in the classical age of the natural sciences and during the age of enlightenment, the conviction definitely obtained that everything happened of necessity and that it was in the nature of the human mind to judge everything from the standpoint of necessity. Only once admittedly, and then only for a comparatively short time, was there for this a kind of definite pattern: we refer to the cosmic formula of Laplace. Laplace maintained that all processes could be expressed by differential equations as used in Newtonian mechanics. But Laplace's theory had, strictly speaking, only a bearing on mass-points, and could only be upheld in the case of heavenly bodies which are so remote that they, i.e. the suns and planets, can be regarded, of course only approximately, as mass-points. Only in this case, and on the vague assumption that everything happens in the same way on a small as on a large scale, could a hypothesis be developed, according to which all events might be calculated (in a pre-relativistic sense) backward in the past and forward in the future. But the mechanics of the *continua* enables us already to transform Laplace's causality into a statistic view. As soon as we pass from statistics to the theory of probabilities, we have already rejected Max Müller's view; for who would have thought of applying the modest considerations of probability made in the 17th century to astronomy, mechanics, the science of electricity, the science of population, and so to history? It is clear, therefore, that we must repeatedly revise what we have learnt; that is to say, our striving after veracity can only take the form of working and co-operating in the progress of the natural sciences

and the humanities. In this connection all truth would only be historical, not absolute. Truth is co-operation.

From this premise, however, new light will also be shed on the religious conceptions of the past, in the present connection, e.g. on chance and probability in the question of salvation. In the sense of physical chance, from which we started, chance is denied and rejected by the Christian religion, as this religion makes everything dependent on God and consequently removes it into the sphere of divine arbitrariness. Thus Feuerbach says that the mystery of predestination is the mysticism of chance. This religious mystery of chance, therefore, is incompatible with the scientific nature of chance. To work out the scientific nature of chance and to leave the religious mystery to be the object of psychological analysis implies the sacrifice of the passionate, i.e. divine love of truth to the heart's longing for peace.

The religious-metaphysical problems do not, however, simply resolve themselves into physical problems, and even if this were the case, it would not mean that a comprehensive statement of the problems had been made. It is not possible to maintain that an apparently nonsensical scientific problem is in principle insoluble. Let us consider, for example, the necessity for astronomy and physics of a definite beginning of the world in time, i.e. of the origin at some definite date of the galaxies of stars. It is impossible to conceive how such an origin can be expressed in perceptual or mathematical terms. What could there have been before the so-called "beginning of the world"? No theory of relativity, no statistics, nothing, absolutely nothing, could make intelligible to us the transition from the *potentia* to the *actus*, and that is our only concern here. In fact, it would not even be possible to formulate a philosophical problem, which would enable us to allow for a *suspensio judicii*. Certainly we have much more solid ground under our feet when we discuss the problem of the increasing spatial expansion of the universe, or the end of the world as the result of cooling off, and the loss of energy of the atoms by radiation, but this presupposes nothing less than that we have some opportunity to participate profitably in astronomical and physical research. Consequently, considered

from this point of view, inward veracity is a spiritual mood which is able to forego world-embracing systems, but which also makes a point of being as scientifically conscientious as possible. Nevertheless, the probabilities as to what is happening in the firmament, biological possibilities, sociological theories and history give us the possibility to make a speculative characterization of the world which, after all, because of this misconception, will enable the human character to participate again in what is going on in the universe.

So man's views and notions about truth and reality mature but slowly ; they are only to be found in scientific progress, and in them he is aware of unavoidable sources of error and also of the limits that are set to the possibilities of perception. Participation in such research, however, can produce a love of truth of an almost religious fervour, i.e. can produce a frame of mind which will exclude all toleration of what is obviously false and all sympathy with what is irresponsibly asserted, and which will simply demand that war be declared on what is manifestly untruthful. That would be a good, a really religious war, a sign of a mature mind.

THE SYSTEM OF DVAITĀDVAITA

SWAMI DHANANJAYA DAS BRAJAVIDEHI MOHANTA

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I deem it a great fortune on my part to participate in the deliberations of this World Parliament of Religions, convened in the hallowed name of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva. Sri Ramakrishna belonged to no sect ; no sectarian narrowness ever touched him. He equally honoured and accepted all creeds and faiths. It is his universal acceptance of faiths that has drawn today saints and savants, philosophers and thinkers of the East and the West to this august assembly.

I belong to Śrī Nimbārka School of Vedānta. The religion inculcated by sages like Sanaka and Nārada, and preached by

Śrī Nimbārka is also universal and all-comprehensive. It will lead to peace and blessedness by dispelling ignorance and discord among mankind.

Philosophers have written different commentaries and built up different systems on the Vedānta Philosophy. In names only these systems are different, but in essence they are one. Their ultimate goal is identical. The *Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha* is Śrī Nimbārka's Commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa. His system is called *Dvaitādvaita-vāda* or the theory of Monism standing side by side with Dualism. This system is in entire consonance with other schools of thought.

The Philosophy of Śrī Nimbārka is broad-based on the Śrutis, the Smṛitis and the *Brahma-Sūtras*. It propounds that (1) Brahman or the Supreme Self is Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute. In this aspect He is One without a second. It is in this aspect that He is known as Impersonal, Immutable, etc. (2) Again, He is the incomprehensible Dispenser of various phenomena—the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of this Universe with endless names and forms. He is both the efficient and the material cause of this universe. So He is all-knowing, all-powerful, all-dispensing, all-pervading. In this aspect He is called *Īśvara*. (3) He projects Himself and enters separately into every part of this vast universe. The separate projections are called individual souls (*jīvas*). So individual souls are endless and every individual soul is His part in respect of *Chit*. As the relation of both difference and identity exists between the part and the whole, similarly the relation of both difference and identity exists between the individual soul and Brahman. (4) Brahman manifests Himself in endless names and forms, and enters into every part of the universe as enjoyers and individual souls—these names, forms and individual souls are technically called the phenomenal world, which is ever-changing. Brahman is the material cause of this universe and as such He is not separate from but is identical with it. Again, Brahman is the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the universe and at the same time He transcends it, is also its efficient cause and apart from it. This *Dvaitādvaita-vāda* is

consistent with the different texts of the *Brahma-Sūtras* (*Brahma-Sūtras*, I. i. 2, 3, 4; II. iii. 42; III. ii. 27; II. 1-14), and the Upanishads (*Taitt. Up.*, *Svetā. Up.*, etc., etc.).

This system is also in entire agreement with the Philosophy of Sri Ramakrishna, who says: "The Absolute or Unmanifest Being is the Manifest Principle. He who is Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute, manifests Himself in various forms for Divine Sport or *Līlā* (*Śrī Rāmakrishṇa Kathāmṛita*, Part III, p. 77). The aspirant follows the path of discrimination and reasons, 'Not this, not this', and thus reaches the Absolute. When he attains the Absolute, he again sees that the Absolute manifests Himself as the Universe—the finite soul, phenomenal world and the twenty-four categories (*Ibid.*, Part III, pp. 82-83). The great spiritual teachers like Nārada are *viññānins*. A *viññānin* fears nothing and visualizes God with forms and without any form. I have extended both my hands and this is why I accepted *in toto*" (*Ibid.*, Part III, p. 85).

The Philosophy of Nimbārka has no conflict with that of Saṅkara. Regarding the essence of Brahman, Saṅkara and Nimbārka have come to the same conclusion. As regards the relation of individual souls (*jīvas*) to Brahman, Saṅkara says in his commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras*: "When Brahman is the Undivided Whole, He cannot have parts. So when Brahman is the Undivided Whole, why is *jīva* (individual soul) not Brahman?" (*Sūtra-Bhāṣya*, II. ii. 43). Again, Saṅkara says in his *Sūtra-Bhāṣya*: "When the Śrūtis have described the individual soul as both essentially different from and identical with Brahman, we must ascertain the truth in terms of a snake and its coil. As the snake, when coiled, lying still or in motion, is the snake itself in different forms and postures, similarly in different states *jīva* (individual soul) and Brahman stand in both separate and identical relations" (*Sūtra-Bhāṣya*, III. ii. 27). As regards the relation of the phenomenal world to Brahman, Saṅkara says: "The Śrūtis have described the origin of the Universe from Brahman; they have similarly described that Brahman remains in His essence (*svarūpa*) transcending the

ever-changing phenomenal world. By this it has been known that Brahman is separate from the phenomenal world" (*Sūtra-Bhāṣya*, II. i. 27). Again, Śaṅkara says that Brahman is identical with the phenomenal world (*Sūtra-Bhāṣya*, II. i. 14-20). With conditioned mind and body-consciousness, *jīvas* are absolutely independent entities, endowed with the capacities of separate existence and activity from Brahman. But as the result of the method of reasoning, namely, 'Not this, not this,' when the mind ceases to be moved by desires, the conditioned mind vanishes and the soul goes into super-conscious state, the aspirant realises his identity with the Absolute Brahman.

The Philosophy of Nimbārka is not in disagreement with Rāmānuja's Qualified-Monism either. Rāmānuja says in his commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras*: "The separateness of *jīva* and Brahman is taught on the basis of the difference in nature between the attribute and the thing attributed; the relation of identity is established on the fact that the attribute having no separate entity cannot exist apart from the thing attributed but so-exists with the thing attributed" (*Śrī-Bhāṣya*, II. iii. 45). Rāmānuja has expressed similar views regarding the objective world also. (*Śrī-Bhāṣya*, II. ii. 29).

Sri Nimbārka's Philosophy has also no conflict with Śrī Madhva's system. Śrī Madhva, too, has mainly accepted both the dualistic and the non-dualistic statements of the Śrutis (*Pūrṇa-prajña-Darśana*, II. iii. 42, 43, 44).

A Vaishṇava is he who worships the All-pervading Principle, Viṣṇu. Not only the four Vaishṇava sects but also all other aspirants worship Viṣṇu. There can be no conflict when the real essence is comprehended. The teachings of the seers differ in accordance with the different quest, predilection and fitness of the individual aspirants. The ultimate goal is one. Knowing that the Supreme Brahman manifests Himself as the finite soul and the phenomenal world, we must love all and sundry. Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda have set this very noble example before the world and exhorted us to serve all beings as gods. And their followers have dedicated themselves to this ideal of service.

DIVERSITY IN UNITY

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For many centuries, the noblest and most far-seeing spiritual leaders of mankind have been urging us to see "Unity in Diversity." And it is largely under their visible or invisible influence that men have been gathering into groups always more numerous, centring round some ideal, whether religious, national, political or other. Without that tendency, man could never have achieved the progress of which we may justly be proud.

But as groups are getting stronger, better organized, more numerous, as efforts are now being made for uniting, cementing, synthesizing, internationalizing *gradually*, we come to a position which is fraught with ever greater dangers. Instead of the small and more or less harmless wars between small local rulers, we saw nations fighting ruthlessly against nations, we saw world-wars in which men were killed or wounded by crores. Instead of the bitter political strifes which were kept inside the boundaries of one small state, of one city, we see internal war now reaching beyond the frontiers of one country, and the situation in Spain is a grave warning of the dangers of the internationalization of political parties.

The great teaching—"Unity in Diversity"—is being distorted and often used only as a cover for greed of power, as a euphemism for "*L'Union fait la force*." It is becoming more and more dangerous, more and more insufficient. More and more we are thinking in terms of groups of units, and not in terms of units or in terms of the whole. Instead of "world," we now use the awful word "international."

Really, substantially, there is for man only one natural group, viz. mankind. And there is only one natural unit, viz. the individual man. All the classifications, divisions and sub-divisions between the unit and the whole, all churches, parties, nations, groups of all sorts, whether newly invented like nations, or sanctified by time like religions, are artificial, and correspond to nothing

real. A man is a man, and a member of mankind, and nothing else.

Whatever other tag you may put on man, it is artificial and arbitrary. The tag may be useful, and often is, but it is only a tag. We should never look upon it as God-given, we should never worship it more highly than we do man or mankind. When we fall into that mistake, we see our brother-men who happen to wear different racial or national or political or religious tags as competitors, as enemies. Let us keep and use the tags, let us not be deluded by them.

The time has come to go one step further, and no longer to see "Unity progressively installed in Diversity", but to see "Unity" as the first and only reality and to see "Diversity" as radiating from Unity, as a manifestation of Unity. Then we shall be able to classify and divide as we like without danger. Then we shall get away from the exclusive allegiance to one idea which is at the root of all fanaticism, and we shall merrily owe allegiance simultaneously to many groups—one national, one racial, one religious, one political, etc. And the more the frontiers of each group differ from those of the others, the less the danger of becoming fanatical and homicidal.

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

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This is a parliament of religionists. Is it also a parliament of philosophers? That is the question I am here making an attempt to answer.

In the minds of the immense majority of men philosophy is invariably associated with religion. They speak of Christian philosophy, Muslim philosophy, Hindu philosophy, Jain or Buddhist philosophy and so forth. Even competent and cultured scholars generally put religion and philosophy together. There is

undoubtedly a justification for it. Every religion has its own interpretation of life or existence, which is philosophy. But if enquiry should proceed a little further, it would be found truer to say that every man has his own view of life as a whole, and has therefore a philosophy of his own. But does this indicate all that is meant by philosophy?

In the history of religion no event is more remarkable than the recent volcanic eruption in Russia which has nearly levelled to the ground the edifice of religion. No doubt, at all times, there have been individuals more or less indifferent to one or more aspects of religious life. But a wholesale rejection of it by an entire society has been witnessed only in this age. Posterity will perhaps see its significance better than we do. For it is a phenomenon that has already influenced and is bound to influence further the social, political and economic life, not only of the Russians but of civilized nations generally. This event will perhaps be characterized as the most outstanding feature of the history of the twentieth century. The question is often asked by thoughtful men nowadays, "Are we still in a fool's paradise? Even if we have been in it in the past, is it desirable that we should be so any longer, after seeing the revolution in Russia?" The time evidently appears to have come for a re-valuation of the religious factor in human life.

USES OF RELIGION

Generally people believe that religion implies a God or Gods on whom man's life, present and future, depends. But we actually find that there are religions without any belief in God or Gods, not even in an 'other' to which some of the latest thinkers attach much importance. Whatever may be the implications of religion,—for it has been defined variously—no one seriously doubts that in the past it has guided and shaped the entire life not only of individuals but also of communities. It has been the greatest source of consolation to millions of sorrowing and suffering people. It has brought peace and prosperity to communities by effectively binding together myriads of separate individuals for beneficial

purposes. It has to a remarkable degree developed fine arts. It has often promoted social good of the highest value. And for that reason self-sacrifice, voluntary or forced, made in the cause of religion has won the greatest admiration everywhere. Further, the most effective of sanctions for moral life among the great majority is religion. Even from a political point of view it is religion that has served as one of the best means of wielding the mass mind.

Nevertheless, history equally truly points to the dark side of religion. There is no crime or vice known to man that has not been committed in the name of religion. The bloodiest of wars, the cruelest of murders, the most inhuman of tortures, by methods infinitely worse than those invented by science, are traceable to religion. Let alone the past: think for a moment of what happened and is happening particularly in this land of ours. What has transpired all the world over in this respect is well known. This is not all. There is no kind of vice or immorality that has not been perpetrated and perpetuated in the name of religion. And for such practices the most elaborate justifications have been invented. Even those religions that are said to possess the highest ethical codes are not exempt. Such undesirable aspects of religion furnish incontestable evidence for the theories of those psychologists that trace the religious sense in man to sex complexes. Further, in some countries it has tended to the disruption of society and social solidarity, of which political intriguers have taken considerable advantage. Would we not then be nearer the truth if we substituted 'religion' for 'liberty' in that famous utterance of Madame Roland, and said "O Religion! What horrors have been committed in thy name?"

THEOLOGY AND SCHOLASTICISM

Those looking at the bright side praise religion, whereas those that see most of the dark side condemn it outright. But now when we could get glimpses of both the sides, does it not behove us to make an unbiassed enquiry, though we be devotedly attached to our own religious beliefs? There is a South Indian proverb: "Even ambrosia when indulged in beyond measure would be

poison." Could not the same be said of religion? Even 'good customs' are believed by Tennyson to corrupt the world.

Whether there exists a God ; whether He is the creator of the World and whether He is still creating ; whether He is the Governor and Judge that punishes the wicked and rewards the virtuous ; whether there are Heaven and Hell and what they are like ; what God's nature is ; what attitudes of man please Him ; what forms of worship are welcomed by Him ; what connection there is between Him and the Bibles, the Korans, the Vedas and other scriptures ; whether they are eternal and superhuman ; above all, how evil came into this world ; whether God could be good when He has created a Hell: if God should be absolved from evil and the Karma doctrine should be adopted, what are the proofs of its validity?—a thousand such questions form the subject matter of Theology. And the answers given vary with men's inclinations, tastes and culture.

Taking for granted that such dogmas as the above of traditional beliefs and scriptures to be true, men set out to interpret them finding arguments for and against with the help of science, logic and grammar. Since these dogmas have been viewed from a variety of standpoints, the literature that has grown up is enormous. The great majority of men usually mistake these discussions for philosophy, though in truth they form the subject of scholasticism.

The upshot of theology and scholasticism is that there is no unanimity of views on any point. Every topic has its *pros* and *cons*. Conflict and contradiction characterize them all, and are and will be *endless* as some Indian philosophers have pointed out, on perfectly rational grounds. Lest such natural differences should produce doubts in men's minds, zealous religionists have not hesitated to suppress them by declaring that the doubter is doomed to perdition.

Most men, either because they are too absorbed in earning their livelihood to think of such matters, or because they are too lazy to exercise their minds, or because they have only a slave mentality, meekly submit to the judgment of the

theological or scholastic heroes in their midst. Even atheistic religions have their dogmas and scholastic literature. But with the march of human civilization, we find that the thoughtful set to enquire. Neither the dogmas of the theists nor those of the atheists can be accepted as truth without enquiry which is the province of science and philosophy. These conflicting aspects were noticed thousands of years ago.

MYSTICISM

Those that fail, however, to derive any satisfaction from theological or scholastic disputations reject them wholesale and seek refuge in what are known as mystic "experiences," "ecstasies," "visions," and above all, what they term "intuitions." They believe they have found here the bed-rock on which religion stands and consider it impregnable. For, it is seen that even some of the acutest scientists fear to approach this domain of the mystic. They hold religious experience or intuition to be beyond the reach of science. But this hesitancy or weakness of the scientist is no proof of the strength of mysticism. Whatever the opinion of the scientist, the fact remains, as has been observed for thousands of years in India, that the views of the greatest mystics regarding their own experiences and their knowledge of the World are contradictory and in conflict with each other.

Again, as an effect of it on society, we find that for every immaculate and irreproachable Ramana Maharshi, there are hundreds of frauds and fakes whose spiritual haven is the company of such women and men as have met with great sexual or other disappointments in life, not to say anything of the free use by them of wine offered, as in some of their cults, to the Deity. Nay, mysticism also lends itself easily, as an Indian philosopher says, to be used for attaining worldly comforts of other kinds.

This is not all. When mystics seek their satisfaction in this manner and they or their activities in life do not interfere with those of the others, they are most welcome to rejoice in their 'intuitions.' But when their lives or actions influence the societies in which they move, and when we find harm resulting

therefrom, we are compelled to enquire into the truth-value of mysticism. If the 'divine' intuitions of the historical murderers, or of the famous parents that roasted their praying children alive, or of the perverts that seduced innocent women by the score had only confined themselves to their cells or chambers rejoicing in their divine intuitions or ecstasies, we should have had nothing but praise for them.

This essential weakness of mysticism was noticed by thinkers of the days of the *Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad*, thousands of years ago, and by Śaṅkara, the critic, who says that even a "fool" says, "I know, I experience, or I have an intuition of the highest reality." Where is the proof that what he sees or knows is Truth? This is the question of questions that has exercised the minds of the thoughtful men of India.

When seriously asked, the believers in mysticism betake to flouting reason and declare to the world that religious experience is above reason, and that "truth-values" are inferior to what they call the *values of satisfaction*, which are *spiritual* as they term it. Now it does not need much argument to show that such defences have unfortunately fallen flat on enquiring minds because of the patent contradictions which have shaken the confidence of many observers. In a word, even mysticism, like the rest of religion, has its good as well as bad features.

Few are the men that care to weigh both sides—for, small is the number of those that can detach themselves from their religious bias which has been flowing in their veins for ages; and fewer are they that are able to subject their own experiences and thoughts to dispassionate scrutiny. Emotion often gets the upper hand in the generality of mankind and subordinates reason.

NATURE OF RELIGION

In life men invariably seek enjoyment, *peace* or *satisfaction* of some kind. They pursue religion, with God or without God, to the extent to which it helps them to attain this object. And men are of different tastes. So are religions of different kinds,

from the most virtuous to the most vicious of patterns, suited to their temperament, culture and capacity. On the other hand such as have found religion to be an obstacle to seeking their pleasures have rejected it, or modified it so as to keep religion out of their way. Hence though numberless are the religions already in existence, new varieties spring up every day. And every one of them is backed up by the most elaborate arguments, metaphysical, physiological, psychological, with their various theories of intuitions, sublimations, sub-conscious cerebrations, cataleptic states and the like. Religion is the manifestation of a craving. It is thus a universal as well as natural phenomenon. Continuous differentiation is one of its most essential characteristics. Like everything else in nature, it is seen to obey the law 'From unity or uniformity to multiplicity and variety,' in spite of all that men do to the contrary to suppress or check its growth.

TRUTH AND RELIGION

Every follower of a religion thinks that what he believes is truth. What does truth then signify? If what we understand by truth be something like the meaning given to it in mathematics, i.e. as two plus two are equal to four, we see that such must be its *universal* import. It is only such truth that holds good for a Christian or a Mohammedan, a Hindu or a Hebrew, an Asiatic or a European, an American or an African, a man or a woman, the aged or the young. Its chief characteristic is non-contradictability.

But like everything else religion also is changing. Change implies difference. What was believed to be true a hundred years ago is modified considerably today. Can truth be subject to such changes? Again, no persons, however much they may differ in all other respects, are seen to fight in respect of the truth that two plus two are four. But the endless disputes, quarrels, nay wars of religions are proof positive that religion is not based on Truth. And consistently do the mystics reject truth or reason as a test of the worth of their experience. Whatever they

perceive, feel or think, or imagine, is of supreme value to them, provided it brings them "*satisfaction*."

Now, if the highest stage of religion, that of the mystic in which he declares that he is above 'reason' and 'truth,' satisfies one, there is nothing more for such an one to do. But if the feeling be that this matter demands or justifies investigation, one should proceed a few more steps. "The easiest person to deceive," says Lord Chesterfield, "is one's own self." Shall we not then rely upon our 'intuitions' *only* after we make sure that what we know is truth?

Now, to attain to truth by removing all contradictions, could we prevent these growing differences among men of religion? Could we check the wars of the disputants? Could we, in a word, check Nature's process of multiplication? Since the last great Parliament was held in Chicago, some forty-three years ago, religions have increased without number. Multiplication brings with it differences, and differences we cannot do away with. The primitive way of making religion true by means of conversions, or by wiping out of existence the weaker followers of other religions is still prevalent. But this aboriginal method has proved futile; for, the converts have only developed new variants. Differences, conflicts and contradictions are again seen to spring forth endlessly.

The problem, how to prove any religion to be "true" or how to make it true, has yet to be solved. For, religionists want satisfaction before truth.

THE VALUE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF RELIGIONS

It is *not*, however, to be thought that religion has, at the present time, whatever it may have been in the past, no useful purpose to serve. It is still of the highest value as a means, though very slow, of leading men step by step to think of the value of truth. The very multiplicity and variety and the necessary conflicts often bloody, sometimes verbal, goad and force men to think of the need for knowing the truth in religion. Religions in the plural are a necessity that each may see the

defects of the other and expose the fact that religion as such is not based on truth but on mere *satisfaction*, varying with imaginations, which is the cause of a great deal of the human suffering. But adversity yields the sweet milk of philosophy. Next, proselytization and propagandism for a universal religion are mere attempts of childlike minds, for they run counter to the nature that can never be eradicated by any means, do what we will.

The common feature of all cravings is to possess something found or believed to be outside of it, and that as permanently as possible. But what is specially characteristic of the religious craving is its stronger emphasis on the Permanent. In this world of continuous changes and of joys of a most fleeting character the human heart thirsts for "Permanence." Religion seeks to attain it by certain acts of propitiation or of renunciation or by both. But it does not worry itself as to whether the "Permanence" has been actually attained or not. Religious men only imagine that "Permanence" is realizable after they are dead, and while alive, can only believe in it. But where is the proof that any kind of permanence is attained and secured after death? Again, the aim of art and science also is the attainment of the "Permanent" in a measure. All anti-religionists may ignore or even try to suppress religion; but they can never suppress the craving for the Permanent. If diverted from the channels called religions, this urge flows into other channels such as those of science and art. For the same reason, if some forms of religion be suppressed, other forms spring up. Wisdom, therefore, consists in working with nature and taking advantage of religion to attain the object of life or existence.

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

We now see that the real worth of religion lies in its being an effort at seeking the Permanent. But what is the Permanent? Religion cannot answer because of the contradictions in men's views of it. If it were based on truth, there could be no contradiction or conflict, and no religion would have attempted to make converts. For, no mathematician proselytizes another to

bring home to others the truth that two plus two are equal to four. Truth is the direct objective of philosophy—not of religion. The Permanent is sought by everyone individually or collectively, in all actions and thoughts. Whether what is Permanent is manifold or single is ascertainable only when man possesses all knowledge comprehending arts and sciences, not merely religion. What points this out is truth. The artist seeks it, the scientist also seeks it. It is philosophy that co-ordinates all efforts and seeks to get at the Permanent as it actually is. Religion by itself cannot attain the truth. Here let me quote a few words from a philosopher of India:

- I. "The realization of truth is brought about by enquiry and not in the least by the observance of ten millions of religious rituals.
- II. "Knowledge of truth is seen to proceed from reasoning and not by pilgrimages to sacred rivers, etc."
- III. "Let men quote scriptures and make sacrifices to the Gods and let them perform religious acts and worship the Gods. There is no attainment of truth . . . not even in the life of a hundred Brahmās . . ."
- IV. "Neither by *Yoga* (mystic's practice) nor by *Sāṃkhya* nor by religious acts nor by erudition (scholarship) is the attainment of truth possible."
- V. "Loud talks consisting of showers of words, the skill in expounding scriptures and likewise great learning bring on a little personal enjoyment to the scholar but are no good for realizing truth."
- VI. "The scriptures consisting of many words are dense forests which only make one ramble and get lost."
- VII. "For one who has been bitten by the serpent of ignorance, the only remedy is the knowledge of the ultimate truth (Brahman). Of what avail are the Vedas, scriptures, *mantras* and medicines to such a one?"

We learn from philosophical enquiry that all urges, all cravings, all processes in life are but efforts at attaining the Permanent. From eating and drinking, playing and enjoying, up to governing and ruling and acquiring knowledge, all endeavours to attain self-preservation are but the pathways to the Permanent. Neither Russian nor any other power on earth can root out this urge towards self-preservation. Religion is but an aspect of this urge. Till from a knowledge of the changes, general conflicts and contradictions of faiths there arises in one's mind the doubt as to whether what gives "satisfaction" is the Permanent, one remains in the stage of religion and art. When one feels the need for devising other tests of Permanence than satisfaction, to ascertain whether what is conceived as such is the Permanent, one rises to the stage of science. But one remains in the scientific stage till one realizes that all that is known as fleeting and that all knowledge of the world is coloured by imagination or conception, and above all, till a doubt again arises as to whether the Permanent that is beyond all changes and all contradictions is felt. One enters the gates of philosophy, with a view to get beyond the reach of even possible doubts, which alone characterizes truth. Thus the seeking for the Permanent proceeds from religion to philosophy through art and science. Religion interests the largest number ; for, it is the simplest and easiest thing to find satisfaction by imagining whatever pleases one to be the Permanent. Whereas Philosophy interests the fewest ; for, there, it is not imagination or conception that counts, but truth that is independent of them and that is unchanging. So, what could be "Universal" is only Truth, in the world of philosophy, but not in that of religion. And philosophy is, as already indicated, impossible without a knowledge of science also.

That the religious faith of man is subject to change was noticed thousands of years ago in India and is so recorded. That the outlooks of one and the same religion vary with the natural, economic, social and political environments and demands which continually change, is evident to all students of history. Further, what is considered religious by some is considered irreligious by

some others of the same religious body. New adaptions vary not only with the above-mentioned external factors but also with men's tastes and moods. It has been rightly observed by one no less than Swami Vivekananda that there are and will be as many religions as there are human faces and minds. Therefore, there can be no permanent peace based on anything connected with religion by itself or science by itself, i.e. religion or science divorced from philosophy.

The urge towards the permanent, being universal, knows no distinctions of creed, colour, caste, age, race or sex, though the form it takes, called religion, varies with men's minds. It is a knowledge of the nature of the urge, and of its goal called truth, that takes one beyond religion to the enquiry known as Philosophy (*Paramārtha tatva vichāra*).

What is characterized as sectarian, such as Christian, Hindu, Muslim, or Jain philosophy, is, till it reaches the goal of truth, no philosophy proper, but theology or scholasticism or mysticism. Truth is one and the same for all. There is no secrecy about it, no cell or screen is needed for it; no exceptional intuitive experience, no vision, no individual or scriptural superiority monopolizes it. Truth is as wide as the world, and open to all alike, as the knowledge that one added to one make more than one.

TRUTH AND THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

Religionists most undoubtedly feel the urge to seek Truth, but mistaking 'satisfaction' to be Truth feel that they are not called upon to ascertain the nature of 'Truth' which is the province of Philosophy. The foremost question for consideration for a Parliament of Religions, therefore, appears to be this: should we do anything to check this multiplicity? The primitive or aboriginal effort at unifying all religious views and of seeking a universal religion, which is in itself a contradiction in thought, is found to be puerile and futile, because it seeks to run directly counter to nature. And variety which nature produces with its contradictions is the best means of directing men's thoughts to the fact that religion is but

a preparation for attaining the Permanent, which is reached only through a knowledge of Truth. And let it be remembered that philosophical knowledge which leads to Truth is based as much on science and art as upon religion, nay on the whole of life. Religion with the knowledge of science and art is beneficial in that it makes for Truth. The common term "philosophy" used by all faiths and sciences shows that the common factor, viz. truth, indicates that in itself it has no distinctions.

Lastly, the highest authority on religion, may tell us that he is in God or is in touch with God or that he is himself God. Let alone the question how he knows that his God is the same as what all others understand by the term "God." If we ask him how he knows that what he refers to as God is the Permanent, the ever-lasting in the *future* and without a beginning in the *past*, he must play the well-known trick of saying: "You will know it when you become like me capable of having intuitions like mine." This trick, as has been pointed out already, anyone can play. A Parliament of religious thinkers will, therefore, be as much a Parliament of philosophic thinkers, if the former will only see the proper place to give to the objective of "satisfaction" as compared with that of 'truth.' The urge towards the goal of the Permanent is inexorable ; it will not cease till truth is attained. Hence the pure philosophers of old said, "*Awake, arise and stop not till the goal is reached.*"

CONCLUSION

A Parliament like this has, therefore, not only to take stock of the differences and contradictions of faiths, but also to inculcate the best course of making the way easy for attaining the Permanent, which depends upon a knowledge of truth, the goal of Philosophy, that is, Truth uncontradictable. The attainment of truth, however, demands an ethical discipline of a most rigorous character, which sometimes goes under the name of religion as some Indian Philosophers have pointed out. And this discipline, the Parliament will, I presume, unanimously uphold and actively

encourage in every denomination. The Parliament, it is presumed, accepts variety in religious experiences as a necessity and will discountenance the vanity of proselytization, exposing the absurdity of the idea of a single universal religion. Though as a social feature, religion has been at times most harmful, its value as a factor in individual life is unquestionable. Let every individual man or woman seek his or her own religious satisfaction without being induced or forced by another and without inducing or forcing another to the same course. To fulfil the object of the religious craving, nothing is more necessary than the acquisition of knowledge not confined to religion alone, though it is within the reach of the largest number, but of knowledge of all fields of life or existence, knowledge as deep and as wide as is possible for man, for such knowledge alone is the path to the attainment, not in the next world but 'in this world' and 'in this life', of the Permanent.

WHERE WE ARE ONE

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"The seers, getting rid of all their desires, realize the Self, that is the Highest Bliss not to be ascertained in terms," so said Yama, the spiritual instructor of Nachiketas, in going to establish the true nature of the Self for his disciple. The question that is put by Nachiketas is a very serious one, involving, as it does, the two great philosophical problems that have engaged the serious attention of the thinkers of the world ever since the dawn of civilization, giving rise to two seemingly contradictory schools of thought. "How should I know the Self that is the Highest Bliss?" asks Nachiketas of his spiritual instructor, "Does It shine itself or does It shine in and through the universe of names and forms?"¹ To put the thing philosophically, Nachiketas wants to know the ultimate truth regarding the true nature of the Self,

¹ *Kaṭha Up.*, II.ii.14.

whether it is absolutely real or relatively real,—whether the Self is to be realized in its own glory, apart from or in total negation of the universe of names and forms, or in and through the universe, i.e. through its evolutionary process? Apart from its philosophical side, this question of Nachikēśas also records the two lines of *sādhana* (spiritual practices) that had their birth at the very dawn of the spiritual in man. The one line of spiritual *sādhana* is the *yoga* process, which finds its culmination in *samādhi*, in total negation of the universe of names and forms, i.e. the entire phenomenal world, and the other line of spiritual *sādhana* is the *jñāna* process, which culminates in a perceptual change of the universe of names and forms into Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. The practice of *yoga* leads the *sādhaka* back to his own Self as the One Great Cause of the universe, and the effect, i.e. the universe of names and forms, is negated for the time being ; but so long as the cause is there, the possibility of a relapse into evolution is there—in the state of *samādhi* the universe is not negated once for all ; it is only a relative cessation or suspension of evolution. The practice of *jñāna* on the other hand, reveals the universe as an evolution of the Self—an evolution in and through which the Self has eternally been realizing Itself as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. In the practice of *jñāna* the universe is not negated, but it is taken in its entirety as a condition—an indispensable and necessary condition—for the evolution of the Self as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, which is its true nature. The *jñānin* or philosopher thus takes the whole evolutionary process into account and sees, in and through it, only an evolution of his own Self as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. “ All this is verily Brahman ”¹ is thus the final word of the *jñānin* relating to his realization of the Self ; and when the *jñānin* has attained this height of Self-realization—the highest height to which the realization of the Self can attain—the cause and the effect, i.e. the spiritual and the material, have been blended, merged in One Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, thus fulfilling the one grand object² of

¹ *Chhānd Up.*, III.xiv.1. .

evolution, the *jñānin* becoming eternally established in his own true Self as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute.

Whether we want it or not, the evolution is there, because it is the very nature of the Self to evolve. The Sanskrit word for the Self is *Ātman*, which is derived from the root *ata*, which means "to go always, to evolve always." The *Ātman* or the Self thus means that which evolves always. So the attempt of the *yogin* to stop or negate the evolution of the Self once for all is thus futile. It is not by negating but by reading the true nature and object of evolution that one can have the object of one's life eternally fulfilled. But the practice of *yoga* has got a relative value, as it takes the *sādhaka* in the state of *samādhi* back to his own Self in total negation of the universe of names and forms, thus showing the true nature of the Self as the Absolute-Conscious-Blissful-Existence. The practice of *yoga* is thus complementary to the practice of *jñāna*, as by showing the true nature of the Self as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute it helps the *jñānin* to realize that Self in and through the universe of names and forms.

Let us listen to what the spiritual instructor of Nachiketas has to say by way of reply to the question of his disciple: "There the sun does not shine, nor does the moon, nor do the stars, nor do the flashes of lightning,—what to speak of the fire."¹ This shows that negation of all the luminary bodies, i.e. the entire phenomenal world, reveals the Self in its absolute state of Existence, "which is the only effulgence or Consciousness Absolute" and by "that absolute effulgence all the luminary bodies—i.e. the entire phenomenal world—shine forth."² This again shows the Self as self-effulgent, i.e. as Absolute Consciousness, and all the phenomenal world as revealing that Absolute Consciousness. "It is through its effulgence that all the luminary bodies—i.e. the entire phenomenal world—shine forth as distinct bodies."³ This also proves the relative existence of the entire phenomenal world. In these two *ślokas* the philosophy of the Upanishads is given in a nut-shell—that the Self is the only Reality and it is absolutely real, and that relatively also it is the Self that is real. In this Philo-

¹ *Kaṭha Up.*, II.ii.5.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

sophy of the *Upanishads* we thus find a wonderful synthesis of the individual self (*jīva*), the universe (*jagat*), and the Supreme Self (Brahman)—the highest synthesis, which philosophical speculation can arrive at. Establishing the Self as the only Reality, it does not negate the universe, but takes it as an indispensable condition for the evolution of the Self as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute,—“ All the phenomenal world shines forth or reveals only that self-effulgent Existence.”¹ The fact is that the Self, which is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, evolves Itself as the universe of names and forms in the very act of knowing or realizing Itself as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. The evolution of the universe is thus eternally going on in the Self for the realization of itself as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute,—“ In order to realize that nature of His,” which is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, “ He evolved himself in various forms.”² The myriads of creations are thus the forms, in and through which the Self manifests and realizes Itself as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute.

“Study your Self through nature”—is the dictum of the Vedic seers, and we find an echo of this Vedic dictum in the words, “ Know thy Self ” of the great Greek philosopher. But the verdict of the modern world is, “ Study nature,” and nature being as eternal as the Supreme Self, whose nature it is, and it being eternally changeful, the study of nature will be going on eternally, never reaching an Ultimate Truth, for which we feel, by the very constitution of our being, an intense longing. But even such is the dramatic irony that while we are thinking that we are studying nature, we are really, though unknowingly, studying our self all the time! The difference that is drawn between the individual self (*jīva*) and the Supreme Self (Brahman) is only this, that while the Supreme Self is knowingly or consciously studying Itself through the evolution of nature and enjoying Itself as Infinite Bliss, the individual self is doing the same unknowingly with the result that it is suffering sorrows and miseries, its so-called happiness being only a make-shift, a temporary suspension of misery. When the individual self does this knowingly, i.e. when it comes to

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Bṛihad' Up.*, II.ii.19.

know that through all its works it is only studying itself, it realizes itself as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, even as the Supreme Self that has been doing the same knowingly throughout all eternity ; and in this matter of enjoyment of the Self the individual self and the Supreme Self—the *jīva* and Brahman—are identical.

“ Evolution of the Self as Absolute Consciousness ” upholds the Śruti, “ is the cause of the universe of names and forms.”¹ The evolution of the Self as the universe of names and forms is spontaneous in the Self. It is not out of a sense of want that the Self evolves itself as the universe, but it is only out of a sense of enjoyment of the true nature of the Self that the Self evolves itself spontaneously as the universe of names and forms. From the stand-point of the Supreme Self this universe is thus a reflector of its own nature, which is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. So there is no sense of want, because through this evolution the Self does not get something other than its own Self, but enjoys its own Self that is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. It is totally unlike our individual creations, where we create only out of a sense of want. It follows then, that, though the *jñānin* must begin with a search after the true nature of his own self, which implies a desire on his part, he must ultimately give up even this desire—this search, and surrender himself totally to the Self, in which state the universe will appear in its true perspective, evolving spontaneously to reveal the Self as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. If, in the act of knowing or realizing itself as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, the Self has evolved itself as the Universe of names and forms, the desire to know the true nature of that Self will only be adding and multiplying fresh creations and that *ad infinitum*. The passage, “ How should you know the knower, i.e. the Self?”² thus settles the eternal quest of the *jñānin* and asks him to give up all his desires and throw himself completely upon his Self, and then and then alone the universe of names and forms will appear as an “ evolution of Consciousness,” revealing the true nature of the Self as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. “ All this

¹ *Varāha Up.*, III.7.

² *Bṛihad. Up.*, II.iv.14.

is born in me, in me is all this established and it is again in me that all this is merged, so I am Brahman, the Supreme Self, One without a second."¹ This is the highest state of Self-realization in which "the individual self and the universe, the *parā* and the *aparā*—the superior and the inferior—are merged in the 'Supreme Self, Brahman, and all the knots of the heart are cut asunder, all doubts vanish and all the works that keep it bound in the domain of nescience are destroyed.'"² This is the Religion of self-surrender or Love, which dawns upon the individual the moment he has realized his identity with the Supreme Self and has read the true meaning of the universe only as an evolution of Consciousness. "The Religion of Love is that attachment which the *jñānin* feels for the Supreme Self after he has realized his identity with it."³

The question is not then, whether the world exists or not, but what the world of names and forms stands for? And the question has once for all been settled by the seers of the Upanishads, which is voiced forth in the famous line quoted above—"In order to realize that nature of His, He evolved Himself in various forms." It is only the Self that exists both absolutely and relatively—absolutely, i.e. independent of the evolution, and relatively, i.e. in and through the evolution. It may be added here that relatively also it is the Self that is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. To cite the famous illustration of the Vedānta, it is the rope that exists even when one perceives the snake in it: "Like the existence of the rope in the perception of the snake it is only the Self that exists as the substratum of the universe of names and forms, the universe exists not."⁴

From the consideration of the ultimate philosophical truth, which thus establishes the Self both absolutely and relatively as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, let us now turn to the process of realization of that Self as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute—from the theoretical aspect of the truth let us now turn to its practical side. "With a rational mind the search after

¹ *Kaivalya Up.*, 19.

² *Mund. Up.*, II.ii.8.

³ *Sāṅḍilya and Nārada Bhakti-Sūtra*, 2.

⁴ *Ātmaprabodha Up.*, 12.

the true nature of the Self must begin, when it will be revealed that in the Self there is not the many ; he who sees the many in the Self passes from death to death.”¹

There are three angles of vision regarding the world, viz.—the ordinary unreasoning angle of vision which regards the world as absolutely real ; the angle of vision of a rational mind which regards the world as inexplicable ; and the ontological angle of vision which regards the world as Brahman, i.e. Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. As students of philosophy we are here concerned only with the last two angles of vision.

As the *jñānin* or philosopher proceeds, through a most rigid process of analytical reasoning, backward to the heart of things and keeps steadily on, the world of names and forms then undergoes a change which is only conceptual—perceptually it remaining as before. And as he reaches his innermost Self, the Ultimate Truth, and is seated therein, the world then undergoes a change which is not conceptual but perceptual,—the world of names and forms then melts away, as it were—and it is then a state of Pure, Undivided Consciousness, in which the many is merged and the One without a second prevails, thus revealing the unity of the *jīva* and *jagat*—the spiritual and the material—in Brahman, i.e. in Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. “ Brahman is One without a Second ; in It there is not the many whatsoever.”²

The discipline of the Vedānta wants that the *jñānin* or philosopher should give up all his desires—desires for the enjoyment of the objects of the world—in order to attain this perceptual change of the world of names and forms ; otherwise his philosophy will remain halting only at a conceptual change, thus failing to give him the Highest Bliss, which only a perceptual change of the world of names and forms as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute can offer. “ When all the desires of the heart are got rid of, the mortal attains immortality, and in this very life he realizes his identity with Brahman, i.e. Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute.”³

¹ *Kaṭha Up.*, II.i.11.

² *Tripāḍvibhūti-mahānārāyaṇa Up.*, 13.

³ *Kaṭha Up.*, II.iii.14; *Bṛihad. Up.*, IV.iv.7.

This perceptual change of the world of names and forms as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, which is the one great object of all the forms of Religion and which is the one grand object for which the whole creation stands, far from retarding the progress of the world-evolution, will only help to usher in a state of universal peace and order, thus helping man to become what he claims to be—divinely human and humanly divine. It is not a negation of life, nor does it mean a total surrender of the duties of life ; on the contrary it is the fulfilment of life through all the forms and phases of the world-evolution. One, blessed with this perceptual change of the world as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, realizes that the whole evolutionary process has been for the gradual unfoldment of the Supreme Self that is within, and so he has no quarrel with any form and phase of the world-evolution. At the height of his Self-realization, which brings about this perceptual change of the world as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, the *jñānin* comes to know this eternal truth that it is not blind, inert matter that starts the evolution of the world of names and forms, but a Supreme Power which evolves itself as the world of names and forms to realize itself as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, which is its real nature ; and as this Supreme Power is a Conscious Power (*Chit-Sakti*), it is all good and there can be nothing evil in the whole evolutionary process which it starts, and whatever the *jñānin* does, when he has attained this height of Self-realization and has been seated or established therein, he does for the good of mankind in its grand march onward to a perfected state of Blissful Existence.

It will appear from what has already been stated that the Self is the only *Eternal Reality*, the *Common Repository of us all*, where we are one. It is the infinite ocean of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, upon which is the eternal play of the wavelets of individuals. It is the water that is the only reality both in the ocean and in the wavelets ; even so is the Self that is the only Existence both at the back of the world-evolution and in the evolutes. We are thus all one in the Self, both absolutely and relatively. Strange indeed is the play of nescience that hides this real nature of ours from our view and makes the world an

eternal battle-field for individuals, wherein they thus enter not as the Self realizing its true nature as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, but as individual selves, fighting as *yuyutsus* (fighters) for supremacy, for power, for victory and what not.

We, finite human beings, are held fast and bound under the domination of this tremendous cosmic nescience ; and forgetting thus our true nature of Conscious and Blissful Existence, we are, by the storms of our finite, individual desires, being tossed up and down, to and fro, like so many wavelets in the formless ocean of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. Creations add and multiply, but the one grand object for which the whole creation stands. viz. the realization of our Self as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, we seem to have forgotten in our quest after creative enjoyments ; and forgetting our real nature which is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, we are all on the mad rush of finite creations in the fond, never-to-be-realized hope of capturing the Bliss of Infinitude in the finite, thus adding grief to grief and sorrow to sorrow, and paving the way for universal unrest. The dissensions and discords, in which we see individuals standing against individuals in their struggle for existence, at the very dawn of the world-evolution, have, through evolution of centuries now taken an organized form, in which we see nations standing against nations, the urge at the back being the same, viz. struggle for existence, and all this is due to the tremendous power of nescience that hides from our view *our real nature of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, where we are one*. The Self is thus divided against itself and it is waging eternal warfare against itself.

Coming down from the consideration of the world as a whole to the philosophic world, here also we find a conflict of ideas and ideals—in our conceptual way of thinking we are not coming to a philosophical synthesis ; we also are thus adding our quota to the world-strife. In our desire for worldly enjoyment we have lost the sure anchorage of our Self and we are thus wandering farther off from the shore in quest of the unknown, creating worlds after worlds after our individual desires and running after them like the ignorant following their own shadows or like persons

of frenzied brains following the creations of their own fancy. But, "the Self, that is reflected or revealed here, in this world, is the same Self that is reflected or revealed in the other world, and the Self, that is reflected or revealed in the other world, is the same Self that is reflected or revealed in this world—he who sees the many in the Self passes verily from death to death."¹ It is high time that we should square up all our differences in the conceptual world, and culture and nourish a spirit of extreme desirelessness to attain that perceptual change, in which the manifold is merged and the Self is revealed in its own eternal glory of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, both absolutely, apart from the evolution, and relatively, in and through the evolution. What the world wants today is a galaxy of philosophic seers who, blessed with this perceptual change of the world as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, will help humanity to turn once more back to the Self where we are one.

The picture of a "Golden Age" that is drawn for us in almost all the forms of Religion in the world, shows a galaxy of such philosophic seers at the head of humanity, whose realization of the Self as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute and whose faith in that Self as the Supreme Ruler of the universe, born of that Self-realization, help humanity to have faith in that Supreme Ruler of the Universe, termed in various forms as *Īśvara*, God, Allāh and the like in the different religions of the world, and evolve a better state of life in which all the individuals work through all the functions for a common cause—the worship not of *individuals but of the Individual, the Supreme Self, where we are one*. It is but idle to expect that humanity as a whole will ever attain this philosophic seerhood; what is expected is a set of these philosophic seers called *Rishis*, whose light of Self-realization will break the spell of matter and thus help humanity to march onward in the right course,—the course that will take them all back to the Self, where we are one—and the dissensions and discords that we see raging over the whole world will give place to Equality-Liberty-and-Fraternity, thus ushering in the Golden Age—the dream of every sincere worker for the cause of humanity.

¹ *Kaṭha Up.*, II.i.10.

Let us then silence all our differences in the conceptual world before the highest synthesis, voiced forth by the spiritual instructor of Nachiketas and adapt ourselves to the life to extreme desirelessness, which alone in the words of the Vedānta, is the only sure gate to a perceptual change of the universe of names and forms as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. "When all the desires of the heart are got rid of, the mortal attains immortality and in this very life he realizes his identity with Brahman, i.e. Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute."¹ "Knowing the true nature of the Self as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute from the spiritual instructor, the *Brāhmin*, i.e. the *jñāni* should realize the Self, in a state of extreme desirelessness, as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute ; he should not be given further instruction regarding the Self, as that will only be a waste of words."² Again, "In the Self are established the heaven, the earth, the sky and the mind with all the organs of senses ; give up all other vain speculations and know only the Self that is one, because He is the only causeway to immortality."³

HARMONY IN SCIENCE AND RELIGION

PARSIDH NARAYAN

Gaya, Behar

The science of spirit, briefly speaking, is this:—The Prime Element from which the entire Nature and Super-nature have emanated is one, the Absolute Energy. It is self-existing, infinite, eternal, all-intelligent, all-conscious and all love, truth, etc. This Prime Energy is sometimes latent and sometimes active. When it is latent, there is no manifestation. When it is active, it manifests itself in all possible forms ; and this universe is a manifestation of the same. A thought to manifest arose in the Prime Energy ; and, with the thought, innumerable units of forces began starting, with accelerating velocity, to manifest, and will be constantly starting till another thought may arise not to manifest,

¹ *Kaṭha Up.*, I.iii.14.

² *Bṛihad. Up.*, IV.iv.21.

³ *Mund. Up.*, II.ii.5.

i.e. till eternity. To some length the forces proceeded passively and with the velocity, the sound 'Om' was produced. So long the units got the name of *Śakti*, and on account of their passivity are styled as female. As the velocity increased, some of the units got better advanced and began to devise means for active manifestations. These are named as Lower Brahman or Creator. There being affinity (love) among the units, they attracted the inferior units which clustered round them, and formed into fine atoms called ether. There was forward motion in the inferior units, but they were attracted sidewise and so, by a resultant force, they began to rotate round the central units, and like a pyrotechnic *charkhi* at full rotation they began to appear like a ring. Thus the atoms got form and volume, and thus grossness began. Similarly, as the velocity increased, advanced atoms of ether attracted inferior atoms, and molecules of air were formed. Their forms became grosser by the above process, and by their rolling on with greater velocity blowing capacity was produced in air. In the same way, advanced molecules of air attracted round them clusters of inferior molecules of air, and as their volume and velocity increased grossness increased. By the friction of the molecules of air, in the course of their rolling on, heat was created, as lightning is created by the friction of vapours of the cloud, and molecules of fire were formed. As by similar process the volume and velocity increased further, heat increased, and the molecules of fire liquefied, like the melting of metals on fire, and molecules of water were formed which were cooled by contact with air. As volume, velocity and power of attraction increased further, by the increase of power of attraction, power of cohesion was created, so that grossness changed into denseness and dense matter, water, came into existence. Lastly, as the velocity increased to its extreme, by similar processes, volume and grossness increased further, and as the power of attraction increased by largeness of volume, the power of cohesion also increased and density changed into solidity, so that molecules of water congealed into molecules of earth which condensed into minerals. Thus the five principal *tattvas* came into existence.

As shown above, in each atom or molecule there is a central

unit of force, and that is its leading and active, and, therefore, its life principle. But during the above processes, as the velocity and volume went on increasing, the forms taken by the units of forces went on becoming grosser and grosser till the form became grossest as earth, stone, minerals, etc., and the spirit-form of the units of forces gradually became altogether indistinct, and finally invisible ; and so life became invisible in matter, and the original attributes of life, intelligence and consciousness also got submerged in velocity. Velocity makes the form indistinct and causes unconsciousness too, as we see that when we rotate a beautiful toy fastened to a string round our finger it looks like a clumsy mass during rotation, and a fast running man, under the influence of velocity, loses much of his consciousness, so that he does not know what cuts or pricks his feet, and he finds out the cut or prick only when he comes to a standstill again. When, in this way, the units of forces got the extreme velocity and reached their grossest stage of manifestation as unlife-like earth-element, forward action of manifestation ended, and reaction began. This reaction is called the process of evolution, for the units of forces now evolve their original conditions. In this process the units of forces, like a ball thrown on the ground, did revert their courses of action backward, that is, towards latency or Brahmanhood, whence they emanated.

When we let fall abruptly a cupful of water upon earth, by reaction it reverts and tries to reach the point whence it fell, and in so doing the cohering particles and molecules of water disintegrate and scatter in various directions, and the central drop only rises straight upwards to the point whence it dropped down. Similarly, as the forward force in creation reverted backwards, the sidewise forces of attraction or cohesion also changed their courses and reverted backwards, that is, changed into forces of repulsion.

During the course of reaction or evolution, as the central unit force rose up and up backwards towards Brahmanhood, it went on repelling, i.e. shaking off and off the cohering molecules, first of earth, then of water, then of fire, then of air, and lastly of ether, till it became pure unit of force (Spirit) free from all transverse forces of attraction, cohesion or repulsion.

In each of the shaken-off molecules or group of molecules a new potent nuclear unit force took the lead and became its active or life principle and carried on its own evolution with the rest of the molecules as auxiliaries.

Thus three forces of evolution, repulsion and attraction began to work simultaneously and the different kinds of molecules got disturbed and confused, but their disturbance was yet systematic and cosmic, and the five *tattvas* began to combine chemically. By their combinations, by the process of permutation and progression, innumerable compounds—say the eighty-four lakhs of the lower *yonis*,—each in two sexes, were formed. These are classed into five groups, viz. the mineral, vegetable, insect, bird and animal kingdoms, according to the largeness of proportion of earth, water, fire, air or ether element respectively in their constitution. In each body or organism, thus formed, there is a central unit of force—as in case of atoms and molecules—which is its life and leading principle. In the body of man it is named as soul, in sub-conscious stages it is called life, and in unconscious stages it is called energy. Thus there is a soul in every body, and thus it is by nature eternal and, therefore, immortal. The form of soul in mineral body is as solidity ; in vegetable body it is as moisture ; in insect body it is as heat, and so every insect is more or less venomous ; in the body of bird it is as air, and so birds can fly ; and in animal body it is as ether, and so beasts are more affectionate and tamable than birds and insects, for love is the propensity of ether. Thus, each human soul is a unit of force which has crossed the stages of unitary life, atomic life, molecular lives, and organic lives of eighty-four lakhs of *yonis* through the unconscious and subconscious stages of evolution, and in human life has reached the conscious stage. At this stage no transverse force is acting contradictory to its straight and upward tension of evolution, but only a vibration caused by the detachment of the transverse forces is quivering the straight and upward-going unit of force (soul) in the form of *vāsanās*, as vagrancy of the mind, which when settled and calmed, after their due manifestation and proper control, the soul shall reach the super-conscious stage of *jīvanmukta* and gods, i.e. the stage of divinity, which will be

manifest by its regaining its original divine powers and lustre, and shall finally attain to Brahmanhood.

The attainment of Divinity can be effected in one human life, simply by moulding the thoughts and regulating the mode of life. This is the secret of *Karma-Yoga*. Its process, however, can be accelerated by developing the divine attributes, which all are present in man, in a methodical way—by education and practical life, by psychic control and by *jñāna*. For this purpose he must practise 'calm and one-pointed thinking, with one mind to one topic, and without deviation, for at least thirty minutes daily. This will mould his thought and will teach him devotional thinking. i.e. concentration. Just as the divergent rays of the sun, when concentrated through a lens, can kindle fire, so concentration of the mind awakens the latent divine potentialities in man. Concentration leads to *dhyāna*, *dhyāna* leads to decisions, i.e. intuitions, decisions give *jñāna* and *jñāna* gives Peace, i.e. *Nirvāṇa*.

Formation of *trishṇā*, i.e. attachment to a *vāsanā* is the only deviation from the right and natural course of evolution, and is the only real sin. It makes the soul fall in a whirlpool of rebirths and brings about all the calamities that infest a *trishṇic* life, in the shape of disappointments, heinous diseases or disasters; for, enjoyment is in your share or fate only as much as is due and proper, i.e. as is required for due manifestation, and is ordained by nature and evolution. Any further longing is unnatural, and is met with disappointments and disasters. Save this whirlpool of rebirths and consequent calamities there is no other hell. All reports about hell are utterly false. After death the human soul either goes to the region of Divinity, if it has so evolved itself, or, if it has got unmanifested *vāsanās* or has formed *trishṇās*, it at once begins to build up its new body. Fear no death, have hope, have peace, and have faith in your *self* which is surely divine.

THE DESTINY OF MAN

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I. LIFE'S IRRATIONALITY

"Chance," "fatality" and "destiny" are words which call forth in us a series of ideas, projected upon a common background of mystery and melancholy.

Full of joy and satisfaction, caused by some good deed just performed, we go into the street to return to our home. But, lo! we step upon an orange peel, thrown away by a child in an outburst of joy, and we slip for ever out of the entanglements of this life. Or, maybe, we notice it a moment earlier, and with the point of a stick we push it out of the way to protect others from this misfortune.

When we expect it the least, we meet the man or the event, that we did never hope to meet with, and that will be from now onwards a cause of great misfortunes or, on the contrary, of the most fervently desired realizations.

Someone would say, "It's mere chance!" hiding under these words the ignorance of the entanglements which have caused this event; or say, "it was his destiny," wishing to define thus the firm belief in a determination which, he thinks, had revealed itself to him in its general outlines; or again, "that was his fate," claiming thus the presence of a mysterious influence upon the details of our daily life.

"Chance," "fatality" and "destiny" are words through which we wish to explain life's irrationality—events which are beyond the normal logic—but which do not flatter at all our pride as rational and free beings. Even if destiny overwhelms us with its favours, we can be neither proud nor particularly glad. A sentiment of humiliation, however faint it may be according to the moral sensibility of each of us, slips into the soul of one who came to be a possessor of goods which were not gained by a freely devised effort.

In the case of an undeserved and unexpected gift, we have the impression of a wrong done to someone else, as in the case of an undeserved disaster which befalls us, we have the impression of being wronged ourselves. In both situations man feels helpless like the toy of powers which use him like a lifeless thing.

Now, our life is full of such events. There are luckless men, apparently born for disaster, as well as others who meet luck wherever they turn, even when they try to avoid it.

2. THE MEANINGS OF THE WORDS " DESTINY " AND " DETERMINATION "

Among all words used to express our bewilderment in the presence of the unexpected and often strongly affecting, " destiny" is the one most frequently used. Through this word we express the diverse meanings which " determination " may assume in the life of man.

One meaning coincides with " determinism," according to which all that happens in this world belongs to a chain in which every link occupies the only place which it could occupy in view of the antecedents, for so necessary is the connection which unites them. All happens in a causally determined succession. Whatever happens must needs rise from preceding situations, and at the same time it conditions those which follow, in such manner that they will not be otherwise as they are. Another meaning coincides with " fatalism ", according to which whatever happens, therefore the fate of man too, is either fixed in advance—thus it was written for him—and cannot be avoided consequently, or it is determined in every detail by a superior power, which interferes continuously, in spite of all human foresight.

The relationship between determinism and fatalism is close, and that is why these notions are used frequently, one instead of the other. Fatalism is a kind of determinism, but a determinism in which finality and not causality is playing the part. From this point of view there may be established easily an important difference—a difference which appears clearly in the terminology of contemporary philosophy, the technical terms of " causal

determinism " and " final determinism." According to causal determinism any event—therefore the destiny of man as well—is of necessity such as it is, being the result of preceding events, without a special previous intention to make it such as it is. On the contrary, in fatalism emphasis is laid on the intention that man's destiny should be thus and not otherwise. According to fatalism the destiny of man could have been different, if decreed otherwise. Fatal events, too, must not correspond to a chain in which causality, or at least motivation, plays a part. They may follow one after the other in the absurdest way with regard to their mutual relations. These relations must be looked for outside the chain, in the intention which has predetermined them, or which continues to determine them incessantly.

Considering man solely as the product of the causal forces which govern nature, we are in the hypothesis of destiny as determinism. But if we believe that the life of man is guided in the rhythm of its evolution by an almighty will, called God or something else, then we are expressing the fatalistic conception of destiny, which is also a kind of determinism as we have seen above.

All the current conceptions of destiny may be arranged within the frames of determinism and fatalism, or of a kind of determinism which is not yet penetrated by the human intelligence, but which nevertheless would be determinism. Into these frames there could not enter a conception according to which man would be free, because then the notion of destiny itself loses its current meaning, assuming that of a life freely built up by the individual himself. But that is no more destiny. Destiny is always understood as a limitation and therefore subordinated to determinism, which means an obstacle put in the way of liberty. But the life of man can be so understood that liberty should play a part by which he would be able to intervene and modify. We have then liberty in fight with determinism. If we could coin for this idea the word "vocation", we would be able to say, from a certain point of view, that man's vocation is to reduce the restrictions, to remove them, or to subdue them at least partially.

3. CONTEMPORARY CONCEPTIONS OF DESTINY

As the idea of destiny is very much current among men, we shall examine the opinions of some of the most popular writers who have treated about it. Spengler opposes his conception of destiny to causality, fatalism, predestination. He says: "Destiny is the word for an internal surety which cannot be described."¹ By that is meant an internal direction (*ein inneres Gerichtetsein*) which, far from being causality, must neither be confounded according to him with finality against which he rises. History is "heavy with destiny" and "free of laws." Nevertheless we "may divine the future, and it is a look which penetrates deeply into its secrets, but we cannot calculate it."

Now, if we can divine the future ("*Man kann die Zukunft ahnen*"), it means that the future must needs happen, it means that history must needs evolve in a certain way and not in another.

A particular form of determination must, therefore, be at the base of destiny, even if it is not a question of the causality of natural sciences. That is why even Spengler cannot but make that difference between causality and destiny: "Causality is realized destiny hardened in the forms of intellect. Destiny as such stands outside and beyond whatever notional nature" (*steht jenseits und ausserhalb aller begriffenen Natur*)²

Although destiny cannot be explained with a "therefore and that is why," it is nevertheless characterized by "the innermost necessity!"³ That is why Spengler, although he rises against predestination as an "absurdity,"⁴ speaks nevertheless of culture (which belongs to the world of destiny) as of something the course of which may be foreseen: ("*hier zum erstenmal aber kann eine Kultur voraussehen, welchen Weg das Schicksal für sie gewählt hat*").⁵ It is not possible otherwise, even if "we can divine the future."

¹ Oswald Spengler *Untergang des Abendlandes*, Vol. I, p. 153, ed. 66-68, München, 1923.

² *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 182, 183.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

But in this case can a destiny, which can be divined and foreseen, be opposed so absolutely to determinism and identified with liberty from whatever laws? All that must happen of necessity is either subject to a law (e.g. causally determined); or it is fatal in the sense of a predestination or of a primary cause which acts directly upon events without the intervention of secondary causes of the nature of those governing the natural sciences; or it is subject to a new kind of determinism. Destiny outside determinism cannot be constructed by Spengler in spite of all his efforts.

Keyserling also develops the conception of a destiny with a deterministic character. He understands by destiny "a necessary tie between the soul of man and his fate (*Geschick*) a necessary relation between that which is internal and that which is absolutely external."¹

It is the question of a psychological connection which is detected by Keyserling between man as he is with all his determinations, and the external events, which, in the majority of cases, do not appear at all as the work of chance, but which appear to be called on purpose by man—so much do they fit in with him and with the essence of his nature.

Let us see, however, if destiny must be looked for in this tie between man and external circumstances, or if this tie be not the mere manifestation of another factor which, as such, rather could be called destiny. Truly, the necessary relation between the soul of man and the external circumstances, may be understood very well, considering the selective power of man who, according to his faculties, makes a selection, approaching some of them, avoiding others. As with some one born blind, who will not be able to make the portrait of anybody and who will be deprived not only of all the joys, but also of all the sorrows which are linked to the aspect of the surrounding world, but who will be able nevertheless to interpret the world the more lively by aid of the other senses, so it is with everyone of us who will bring into his sphere of life

¹ Graf Herman Keyserling, "Das Schicksalsproblem" in "*philosophie als Kunst*," p. 148, ed. 2, Darmstadt, 1922. See also p. 151, where it is said: "The problem of destiny deals with the general relation which exists between the interior of man and his external surroundings."

first of all the events for which there is a certain resonance within him, but who will pass by the others with indifference, unmoved by them. If a certain string in us does not vibrate in the presence of certain external events, the relation between us and them will be a relation of indifference, and the whole evolution of our life will be different from what it would be when these events bring forth in us a powerful reaction, be it a positive or a negative one. Now, even Keyserling orients his idea of destiny in this sense: he affirms, "Men, on the whole, attain the purpose for which they are called, and if the ship of their life is wrecked, it is because the rock was usually within themselves."¹ But, if it is a question of certain faculties inherent in man, by which the external events will be called forth somehow by him, or will be removed, we do not see how his destiny could be looked for any longer in their adaptation to the external circumstances; but destiny, on the other hand, must be found where it is located in reality according to that same conception, viz. in the soul of the individual man, which is so built up that he has these faculties—faculties which call forth these events and no others. And then the problem of destiny is another one than that which Keyserling wishes to deal with. It is no longer the necessary tie between the soul and circumstances, but another idea about which he does not intend to treat—as he declares from the beginning—and about which he treats nevertheless without intention, with a view to discussing a new and original conception of destiny. This fact introduces of course much obscurity in his argumentation. The idea of man as being the origin of the events of his life has been treated long before very beautifully by Emerson and Maeterlinck, with whom Keyserling, nevertheless, opens a controversy. Maeterlinck, like Keyserling, had said really: "Let us not forget that nothing happens which is not of the same nature as we ourselves."² And even on the same page in which this passage occurs he adds: "On the roads of chance you will not meet anybody by yourselves." Emerson spoke about destiny in the same sense: "the soul contains

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 149; see also p. 151: "nur das vermag es (das Leben) zu affizieren, was sich dem Rahmen seiner Eigenart einfügen kann."

² Maurice Maeterlinck "*La sagesse et la destinée*," p. 35, Paris, Fasquelle.

the event that shall befall it." . . . Events are the children of our body and mind. We learn that the soul of fate is the soul of us, as Hafiz sings."¹ Even more, in Emerson we find almost word by word, as later in Keyserling, the formula: "The secret of the world is the tie between person and event."² Destiny as "tie" etc., is reduced to destiny as the nature of the human soul, therefore to another notion of destiny than the one about which Keyserling wished to talk. But he does not stop here; his idea of destiny becomes even more obscure because of other meanings which he introduces into it. Thus, if destiny, as we have seen above, was defined as "the necessary tie between man and his fate (*Geschick*)", meaning thereby the tie between man and the external events, then we find immediately following the assertion that "the internal man grows in correlative-ness with his destiny (*Schicksal*)",³ and then destiny is no more the tie between man and events, but these events themselves. He uses first the word "*Geschick*" (translated by us "fate") to name the external events, and destiny was the tie between the soul of man and these events. Then we saw that destiny was identified with the soul, as in Emerson and Maeterlinck. Now destiny becomes something external, in correlation with which "the internal man grows" (*der innere Mensch erwacht*). But not even that notion of destiny was intended by Keyserling, so much the more, as by destiny in that last sense he understands just the events, the hazards and even the whole surrounding medium. Still more, even on the same page he asserts in addition: "There exists a rule, which brings with necessity certain hazards into the sphere of a certain life. We not only discover subsequently the adaptation of destiny to the man whom it befell, but we can divine that destiny."⁴ Now, it should be noted that there is a difference between the necessary tie in the first definition, viz. that one which he gives as emphasizing the meaning of destiny, to which he clings, and "the rule" which appears now, a rule in which we find the idea of destiny in the sense of an event decreed to happen

¹ R. W. Emerson, "Fate" from "The Conduct of Life," p. 32. Vol. V, "Works of Emerson," London, Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1902.

² *Ibid.*, p. 32.

³ Keyserling, quoted passage, p. 150.

⁴ Quoted passage.

thus and not otherwise and therefore in another sense than the one about which Keyserling intended to speak.

The problem of destiny is treated in a much more luminous manner by the other two thinkers and writers of real genius, mentioned previously.

For Emerson as well as for Maeterlinck, destiny confounds itself with the limitations imposed upon us by nature, be it the question of the nature of each of us, the nature of our soul, or be it the external nature. Those limitations are fatal. But for both there exists something which is called liberty, and which can resist fatality and limitations.

"But if there be irresistible dictation," says Emerson, "this dictation understands itself. If we must accept Fate, we are not less compelled to affirm liberty, the significance of the individual, the grandeur of duty, the power of character."¹ The power which gives us the possibility to fight against fatality dwells in our intelligence, in our spirit, which will use fatality itself to oppose fatality. To those who believe that all is fatality, Emerson says that then "a part of Fate is the freedom of man."² It is fatal that man should be free, he therefore may oppose the fatality "of choosing and acting in the soul" to the fatality which imposes limits upon him. But not only so much, man has at his disposal intelligence, thought, spirit, and "Intellect annuls Fate,"³ making us free. Our thought is "the thought of whatever intellect." "It is poured into the souls of all men, as the soul itself which constitutes men."⁴ And when the souls reach a certain clearness of perception, they liberate themselves of all that is inferior, base, selfish, of all that is a limitation, and "accept a knowledge and motive above selfishness." Depth of thought leads to strength of character. Thought makes us free. But besides thought, there is the moral sentiment, another force of liberation. "The moral sentiment makes us free, because with the perception of truth is joined the desire that it shall prevail."⁵ Still "perception is cold, and goodness dies in wishes."⁶ But

¹ Emerson, quoted essay, p. 4.

² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

their union may lead far: "There must be a fusion of these two to generate the energy of will." By the power of will man can oppose whatsoever. Clarity of intelligence and warmth of sentiment, united in will, can transform in truth man into a formidable power, which will use fate to govern it, subdue it, to make it a helpful element of freedom, because "Fate is the name for facts not yet passed under the fire of thought—for causes which are unpenetrated."¹

Maeterlinck also does not discover fatality except in certain external disasters, but says that internal fatality does not exist: "The will of wisdom has the power to mend all that does not touch our body with death."² Therefore, in our spirit, when it knows how to look at things from a sufficient height, to take them as they are and not to be deceived by their proportions, which appear quite changed when looked at from too near; in our spirit, when it knows how to guide will, resides the power of resistance against fate.

The destiny of man is only to a small extent the fruit of fatality. In each case, whatever be the external chain of the events of our life within us resides the power to make the internal events such as we wish them to be.

Wisdom has the power to "paralyse destiny." "There are disasters which Fatality does not dare to inflict in the presence of a soul, that has subdued it for several times, and the wise man who goes through, interrupts thousands of dramas."³

Emerson and Maeterlinck do not pretend to make a theory. They write out of an impulse to contribute to the welfare of mankind, and moulding the souls through the direct influence of their words, springing from the depths of a noble soul. The logic of their argumentation is nevertheless wonderful.

4. INTERPRETATIONS

The conceptions of destiny, examined in the preceding sections, offer different suggestions. On the one hand, as in the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

² Maeterlinck, quoted part, p. 43.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

case of Keyserling, we see how much lack of precision in thought is manifested with regard to a problem which is of such ardent interest for man. On the other hand, these conceptions, with regard to the problem of destiny as such, show us the way in which the modern man looks at it. Destiny is considered by some like Spengler to be an elementary creative power which realizes itself in accordance with its internal verve, its surety or its internal direction. In this case, the sense of destiny is the same as the sense of life, perhaps unintelligible to logical thought and therefore irrational,—as neither the law of causality nor the more general principle of sufficient reason can explain it fully—but creative of new forms of life. Thus considered, it is like an artistic creation, which can be understood or rather recognized by those men who are not governed by logical thought with its rigid schematism, but by that special sensibility, that power of divination, that penetration into depths into which logic cannot penetrate, i.e. by artists, be they poets, musicians, men of action, men of rapid and inspired decisions, men of the army, politicians or business men. Others like Emerson and Maeterlinck look upon destiny as upon the resistance which is opposed by the external reality to human freedom or by the rigid and inert nature, compared with which the spirit, superior in mobility and delicacy, is often apparently overcome, because the material mass to which is linked its presence in man is overcome. But in the end it proves to be the real victor, the conqueror of the higher and higher positions, out of which nature was better and better overlooked and subdued, the conqueror embodied in the continuous succession of generations and of the man of creative power.

These are two of the most important conceptions of destiny prevalent among mankind today if we leave out the ancient conception of Moira, of Fatum, which means a perfect fatalism.

At first sight these two attitudes seem to be contrary, but when viewed at close quarters, the likenesses appear immediately.

What Spengler understands by destiny is life not subject to causality, life which develops in accordance with a necessity other than that in the world of causality. To make clear for himself his notion of destiny, he quotes Goethe:

So musst du sein, dir kannst du nicht entfliehen.
 So sagten schon Sibyllen, so Propheten ;
 Und keine Zeit und keine Macht zerstückelt
 Geprägte Form, die lebend sich entwickelt.

That "*Geprägte Form, die lebend sich entwickelt*" is "the internal direction," "the internal surety" of Spengler. Here we have the idea of purpose, and although Spengler wishes to establish his idea of destiny as opposed to determinism and finality, he does not succeed and arrives only at a destiny in the sense of a final determinism. On the other hand, with Emerson and Maeterlinck, destiny is clearly shown as being the limit put by nature in the way of human freedom. For them, destiny is a causal determinism. In any case destiny is understood as a determinism.

But looking beyond the written word, we see that things are, however, otherwise. What Emerson and Maeterlinck call destiny is just causality in opposition to which Spengler unavoidably advocates *his* idea of destiny, as he does it in opposition to finality. And what they call freedom much more approaches what Spengler calls destiny.

From this new point of view, the difference no more consists in their conceptions, but only in the different meanings which they ascribe to the word "destiny." Both consider man in fight with the limitations imposed by natural causality. Spengler's destiny and Emerson's freedom have much likeness ; they represent the independent element according to which man faces the rigidity of causality.

But Spengler remains with his destiny within a pure vitalism, in which life develops according to its internal direction. That is why Spengler's destiny cannot be interpreted otherwise than as a determination and therefore a constraint as compared with the spirit. As compared with the spirit, causality as well as the law which governs in the biological stratum. may be ranged in the same great category of limitations, of obstacles met by the spirit. From this point of view Emerson's destiny and Spengler's destiny seem really to indicate resembling things, that is an inferior plan of existence, above which rises the spiritual plan. We may be sure that it was not Spengler's intention that destiny should be

thus considered. He values life and destiny above all. But from Emerson's point of view freedom has its full value, and all that is limit,—therefore the vitalistic notion of destiny as well—constitutes the element against which the spirit must fight and over which it must triumph.

5. HARTMANN AND THE THEORY OF FREEDOM

For the elucidation of the problem of destiny its relation with liberty appears now to be important. Destiny and freedom are notions which seem to exclude each other. But what have we to understand by "freedom," and in man, by freedom of will?

The problem of man's freedom is really one of the most difficult problems of philosophy, and the solutions proposed are very approximative. From the days of Kant till today, the best solution of the problem of freedom is that by Nicolai Hartmann.

Starting from Kant, he shows that the notion of a negative freedom in the sense that man might find himself in a state of indifference in the presence of a certain situation, being able to choose this way or that, is mere nonsense. That would not be freedom of will, but lack of will. "The free will is not an undetermined will, but on the contrary, a determined will, which chooses in a determined way."¹ Moral freedom does not mean independence, indetermination, but "*determination sui generis*" (p. 589), that is freedom in the positive sense..

Hartmann discerns several strata in the whole of existence, each one having its type of determination. In the whole series of such types of determination causality and finality are only two of the best known.

Thus we have a "primary ontological" determination, a mathematical one, a causal one, a determination governing the sphere of life, a psychological determination of the sphere of conscience; and above the last-mentioned one, we notice other determinations in the spiritual world, and among them the one of values, for which the person, and not the conscience, is the subject.²

¹ Nicolai Hartmann, "*Ethik*," p. 588 (Walter de Gruyter & Co., Berlin and Leipzig, 1928).

² *Ibid.*, p. 616, a.s.o.

We know only a part of the determinations which become manifest in the strata of existence. Nevertheless, what we know is sufficient for us to see that things are more complicated than in the traditional conception which knew only causality and finality. The theory of the plurality of the strata of existence with their determinations, may protect us from many mistakes made till today, as for example, the one which links the biological stratum to causal determination or to final determination, because the specific of the biological stratum with its determination has not been seen. It is true that the causal determination is best known till now. But, not knowing other determinations, we must not draw the conclusion that they do not exist; and we must not, too, try to understand a stratum of existence, applying to it a law which does not belong to it.

Hartmann establishes with regard to these determinations of existence a twofold law, of strength and of freedom.

The inferior the determinations which permeate the whole of existence, the more powerful they are, so that the highest determination which we know, viz. that of the spirit, is in a material dependence of the whole chain of inferior determinations, and has therefore a smaller sphere of application. The teleological determination presupposes at any rate the psychological, the psychological presupposes that of organic life, that of organic life the causal, the causal the mathematical, and the mathematical the ontologic primary determination. The finalist determination is therefore in function of the whole chain of determinations shown above and of those which are intermediate and not yet known, up to the last ontological determination, which thus passes through the whole of existence.

Every determination depends on the inferior one, and is independent of the superior. Yet, the superior determination does not depend on the inferior with regard to its specific, i.e. "the inferior does not hinder the superior in its specific, but allows itself to be super-formed, super-determined by it."¹

The superior determination finds itself in a relation of form to matter with regard to the inferior one. The matter lets itself

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 620.

be handled by form. From this point of view the form is free as opposed to matter, although it is subject to the determinations which are contained in the matter, but which cannot extend up to the specific of form, and therefore up to the specific of the superior determination.

This means that every superior determination, although it is linked materially with the inferior and is weaker than it, is nevertheless "autonomous and free from the point of view of the category"¹ to which it belongs. In this way freedom is understood positively, and it is not only something reserved for man, but every stratum of existence possesses it with regard to the inferior strata, conscience with regard to organism, organism with regard to the causal mechanism of the inanimate nature, and in the same manner the person with regard to conscience.

Freedom means, therefore, the possibility for a superior stratum to intervene in a determining manner in the inferior strata, to intervene as an additional determinant in the play of the determinants corresponding to these strata.

Surely, there is no question here of an absolute freedom, but only of a relative one. It is sufficient nevertheless to save the dignity of human manifestations, as well as to explain the sentiment of liberty, which man always had possessed.

Which relation exists between the person, free with regard to conscience, and the determination of the world of values, for which she is called to decide herself? The values constitute a stratum, in which their special finalistic determination is not complete. They have no other determining power than that one, which is given to them by the person through her intervention. They establish only ideally their absolute "Must" (Seinsollen) with regard to the ethic reality, which partly corresponds to them and partly not. Thus room is made for the freedom of will with regard to the values. Will does not find itself in the presence of a determinism of the values—as it finds itself in the presence of a determinism of the laws of existence—but just in the face of an indeterminism of the values, at least in the face of a partial indeterminism.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 620.

Freedom in the negative sense exists only with regard to values. Will can have only a positive freedom with regard to causality, "because that one (i.e. causality) determines its sphere integrally." But besides a positive liberty, Will has also a negative liberty with regard to the determination of values, because "the determination of values not only does not determine integrally in reality, but does not determine at all without a free intervention of Will for it."

In this way, neither Will alone nor the Values by themselves, but only the interpenetration of Will and Values, can constitute the determinant, which Will inserts into the causal nexus.

Nicolai Hartmann starts with the affirmation that negative freedom does not exist and cannot exist (i.e. a freedom of indifference, a freedom which may bring about a *pro*- or a *contra*-decision), but only a freedom in the positive sense, in the Kantian sense—freedom subject to law. Yet, with regard to Values we see that Will is in a special situation, being able to have such a negative freedom with regard to them, because Will may approve and accept a Value, or may deny it.

Hartmann believes that, nevertheless: "The sentence that 'freedom in the negative sense' as such is not yet freedom of Will, does not lose anything of its value. The free Will with regard to Values, is not an indeterminate will, but completely determinate, not determined directly by them, but by a Will which determines itself with regard to them."¹

Thus Will, and therefore "the person as bearer of moral actions," is at the same time free in a twofold sense—because it is free in two directions—with regard to the ontologic principles and at the same time with regard to the axiologic ones. In both directions exists the same autodetermination, therefore positive freedom, but in the direction of Values there is also the negative freedom besides the positive.²

After this discussion, if we have to answer the question: "How must we understand the essence (*Wesen*) of the personal autonomy, how is it possible from the ontologic point of view?"

¹ Annotated work, p. 715.

² *Ibid.*

we must affirm, " This question cannot be answered." Surely, " the autodetermination of the person must have a kind of new determination, must be a true categorical novum with regard to the other two,"¹ i.e. with regard to the causal and the axiologic determinations. Hartmann says that it is at any rate a finalistic determination, but to say what it is, seems as impossible as to say " what are principles?", " what is reality," " what is a value?"

Important in Hartmann's theory of freedom is the definite acknowledgment of the different strata of existence, each with its determination (an idea, which Hartmann must acknowledge with certain restriction to Boutroux) and the relation of strength of the inferior determinations with regard to the superior determination, as well as of freedom with regard to the inferior determination. The same importance is given by him to the demonstration of the antinomy between " will " and " must " (*Wollen und Sollen*), an antinomy through which is explained the specific of the determination in the world of values, as a determination which cannot be realized except inasmuch as it is received by Will or by the person, as well as the specific of the Will or the person to receive or not to receive the value ; and only thus, Will together with Value, in their specific interpenetration, can intervene in the nexus of inferior determinations.

The theory of strata, however, with their determinations, which mean freedom through the power they have to intervene determinately in the inferior strata, is not perfectly satisfactory, as according to this theory there is left a moment of freedom to every stratum only inasmuch as the superior determination does not intervene, determining as well. From the moment in which such a superior determination intervenes, there does not remain anything of the freedom of the inferior determination, and the final resultant of the whole of determinations may be quite another one than that towards which it tended. But if the lack of freedom of the strata inferior to the person, is of less interest for us, in the case of the freedom of man this lack of freedom would have been felt particularly inconvenient. That is why, in Hartmann's theory, the *sui generis* relation between Will and Values (therefore

¹ *Ibid.*, p. F 19.

two strata of existence with two different determinations) comes to establish at least for man a freedom, no more hampered by the determination of a superior stratum, because persons have negative freedom as well, with regard to Values.

We must, nevertheless, ask ourselves, On what grounds do we ascribe to Will and to the person this special situation? Is it not only an illusion that Will has freedom of choice with regard to Values, if Values have really their own determination? And must the Values be understood like a stratum of ideal existence, different from the strata of real existence? Could it not be the part of Spirit to acknowledge the law of human individuality, and to help thus individuality to manifest itself in conformity with itself? Freedom would be just this manifestation, and it would be a real freedom, remaining a positive freedom without the need of a metaphysical stratum of Values.

HARTMANN AND FICHTE

Hartmann gives Fichte the credit of having brought forth plainly the problem of the antinomy between "will" and "must," but only as a passing flash of light, which he did not utilize.

We believe, nevertheless, that Fichte's merit is greater than that. According to the remark of Hartmann, who reproduces the characteristic quotation,¹ Fichte sees that Will is in a special situation in the presence of the principle (or the value), which means freedom as "indifference" with regard to the life of values, against which Will may and may not act. And the life of values, "wears only the ideal form," has a power which reaches only up to a legislation, up to a "must" (*Sollen*).

Fichte has, moreover, the credit of having offered the possibility of a new orientation, giving the following definition of liberty: "It seems to me to be free in the single events of my life, when these events are the expressions of the independent strength which has been given to me as an individual (*die mir für mein Individuum zu theil geworden*); but to be kept back and limited, when by a concatenation of the external circumstances,

¹ Annotated passage, p. 629.

which appear in time, but have no place in the original limitation of my individuality, I cannot do at least so much as I could do, according to my individual strength, and to be constrained when that individual strength is forced by the preponderance of others opposed to it, to express itself even against its own law."¹

Freedom, therefore, means for Fichte the power of manifestation in conformity with the proper laws of individuality. Now, that conception of freedom is the same as that one acknowledged by Hartmann for each category of determination, when he told that every form of superior determination, although weaker and materially linked to the inferior, is nevertheless with regard to that one "autonomous and free from the point of view of the category," because the inferior determination does not refer to the specific of the superior."²

We find, therefore, in Hartmann, with a remarkable clearness and constancy, ideas, the principal point of departure of which appears already in his predecessors such as Boutroux and Fichte. The merit of Hartmann is very great, because he has shown with an extraordinary logic, the twofold law of strength and freedom, which characterizes the strata of existence. But has not Fichte shown, in the definition of freedom quoted previously, the very road on which freedom must be looked for?

7. BODY, SOUL AND SPIRIT

The theory of the strata of existence with their specific determinations is very well suited to protect us from the mistake of interpreting the whole reality according to the determination which governs in another stratum of reality, as would be, for example, the interpretation of life based on a causal determination.

From the very moment we admit in our existence a plurality of determinations, we understand easily how it is possible for the spirit to have its own determination—another one than that of the matter.

Even if we do not know perfectly well all that belongs to the spiritual determination, it is, nevertheless, of great importance to

¹ Fichte: *Die Bestimmung des Menschen*," p. 20, Reclam.

² Nicolai Hartman, quoted passage, p. 620.

know that this determination exists. In this way are satisfied not only the social needs, which are based on the presumption of human liberty, but even the needs of freedom, manifested in the individual conscience.

Truly, we all feel that we are not mere body, that we are not only soul, but also something else, i.e. spirit.

In this characteristic union, our body is the necessary instrument to come into contact with the surrounding world ; the soul means the power to dwell in a body, and the spirit means the superior reality, which establishes the contact with the world through the intervention of the soul. Vasile Pârvan,¹ that great thinker, likewise expressed his idea of "spirit" as follows: "The propulsive force of the human matter, vegetating in the animality, is the sixth sense of the Buddhist philosophers, '*the thought*.' It could be told that the thought exists as such, as an autonomous element with regard to humanity. There does not exist in reality an ontologic consequence between the psychophysical sensations, on which is based our knowledge of world and life, and the pure ideas."

The soul is "spirit" inasmuch as it is linked to the body, but the spirit is "soul" inasmuch as it is free of the matter, therefore of the body. That definition² of these notions shows clearly our ignorance with regard to certain realities, which are nevertheless so familiar to us. At the same time the positive contents of relationship and difference, which we think behind them, also appear. There exists a strong tie between body and soul, exactly as there exists one between soul and spirit. The differences, nevertheless, are important, and appear clearly when we examine the extremes of these three great circles, i.e. the body, soul and spirit.

The spirit is that something in man, through which is given

¹ Vasile Pârvan, late university professor of Bukarest: "Despre ritmul istoric" in "*Idei Si forte istorice*," p. 141, Bucuresti, Cartea Româneasca, 1920.

² Schleiermacher Friedrich "*Psychologie*," edited by L. George, p. 25, Berlin, 1862. Schleiermacher thought he could admit the same idea, considering as equal the notion of activities of the soul without body, and the notion of spiritual activities."

to him the completest deliverance from the matter. That becomes clear to us especially in the moments when our thought comes into conflict with all that is called instinct and organic determination.

The verse of Ovidius, "*Video meliora, proboque, deteriora sequor*" is typical as showing the special characteristic of the spirit, which consists in a just vision. The soul, inasmuch as it is spirit linked to the matter, has not the power of that clear vision, which the spirit does possess. Here we must look for the great part ascribed to the spirit. He, the spirit, sees in what his law consists inasmuch as he is soul, he sees the relations between himself and the surrounding medium as well. He, therefore, is able to indicate to the soul the liberating attitude, the attitude corresponding to his own essence, even if this free attitude does not succeed always in imposing itself on the inferior strata, the soul and the body.

8. SPIRIT AND FREEDOM

There does exist, nevertheless, a means by which the spirit can, eventually, impose itself on the soul, and through it on the organism. It is a kind of fascination and suggestion, which may be exercised by the spirit upon the soul. The evidence of the views of the spirit, if sufficiently repeated, succeeds in determining an attitude in conformity with it, in the soul. Thus Kant is right in maintaining that virtue is learned.¹ The moral law must penetrate into the human conscience, becoming thus evident. Now, according to Kant, that is achieved by the repeated and continual presence of the moral law. Here we have something like the relation between spirit and soul. The soul stands for a photographic plate, very little sensitive with regard to the much too diaphanous object which is the spirit. There must be a prolonged exposure to get the image on its surface. A continuous representation of the spirit before the soul is necessary, in order that one should be determined by the spirit. In a somewhat

¹ See C. Narly, "*Pedagogia lui Immanuel Kant*," p. 41, ed. Cultura Româneasca, Bukarest, 1936.

similar way does the soul exercise on the organism an influence which ultimately is due to the spirit.

Vasile Pârvan expresses almost the same thing in this way: "Passing into our human world, a great intensity of the spiritual life agitates the more *rudem indigestamque molem*, the more directly and nearly it dominates it."¹

But whatever the explanations, which for a long time may remain imperfect, the human experience was able to get proofs that the influence of the spirit upon the attitude of man does exist. Human experience, too, has stated that x, which we call "spirit," exists really within us, and exists as that x, from which the just vision proceeds. That is sufficient to strengthen our conviction of a human freedom.

Then freedom consists on the one hand in seeing just, and on the other, in being able to influence (assisted by soul and body) the development of external events. Spirit, soul, and body create the total attitude of man. Through this attitude we intervene in a modifying way in the surrounding world. The life of man might be different from what it is, if we help him in his spiritualization. Education is meant to drive out, more and more, that phantom which he believes to be "destiny," and which is only the opacity of matter in the presence of the spirit on the one hand, and the subjugation of the spirit by the soul on the other. The spirit needs for its own clarification the soul, soul, which awakes it, so to say, to life. The spirit is manifested through the conflict of the soul with the surrounding world. But once manifested, it can exercise an influence upon the world. It is like an eye, which must be opened to be able to see. The soul does that work, and opens the eye of the spirit. Once opened, the spirit sees even that which the surrounding reality would keep unseen.

The soul, inasmuch as it is dominated by the organism, binds up its eyes very often. But the spirit succeeds in forcing on it its own view. And that is the great force of the spirit.

¹ Vasile Pârvan, "Despre valorile istorice," (On historical values) in "*Historic ideas and forms*" (Idei Si forme istorice), p. 74. Bukarest, Cartea Româneasca, 1920.

9. SPIRIT AND DESTINY

In this case destiny exists no more. There does exist a resistance with regard to the spirit,—the resistance of the inferior determinations,—in the language of Hartmann, a resistance which may be overcome to a certain extent by the spirit. The life of man is no more the product of a fatality, but the result of the fight, in which the spirit has to say an important word.

That is why all the great thinkers, who are not satisfied with mere words, have conceived destiny as nothing else than the resistance of the surrounding reality, and, at the most, as the part of the defeat of the spirit in the fight with that resistance. But in this case, as we have pointed out above, the notion of destiny does no more merit its name. Destiny is no more a fatal road on which man must needs go on. "*Ducunt volentem fata nolentem trahunt*"—is no more the expression of a truth, but only a semblance.

In the presence of the reality of the spirit, destiny remains like a mythological notion, playing a romantic and literary part, but disappearing in the serious troubles of man.

10. FREEDOM AND ORIGINALITY

Even if we acknowledge the great power of a clear view of the spirit and of its intervention in the reality, there exists in man and with man something, which appears to us like a gift, which we can only receive and fructify, but which cannot be changed. That gift are we ourselves, such as we are born, an organic, psychic and spiritual totality.

The spirit, in spite of all its clear sight and all its power of intervention in its own psycho-physical being, and, further, in the surrounding world, cannot do anything unless it follows the line of the proper laws, the proper possibilities of the individuality to which it belongs. To take an example, an individual with the clearest spirit imaginable, will not be able to modify some physical deficiency with which he was born, or which he acquired later, and as a result he will not be able to prevent a certain bitterness from entering his soul, which will give a specific aspect to his whole behaviour. It depends on the spirit,

however, whether this physical deficiency becomes the wings to take one up into the height of heaven, or a leaden weight and fetter.

Spirit means freedom but only within the limits of the possibilities which it finds in that substratum.

Each of us is born with certain possibilities, due to heredity, and the combination of the hereditary elements, called the *specific originality*. Each of us becomes something, as a result of the contact between that specific originality and the surrounding medium. Here the spirit has the word. The very moment it appears, like a flash of lightning brought forth by this contact, it gives light, it shows the way to the soul. Inasmuch as the soul follows the straight way, it will be free ; if it takes a wrong turning, it will remain fettered.

We all feel that specific originality to be our great dignity. Each of us feels to be different from his fellow-man. There is something within us, which only we possess, which is most precious to us, which is our specific originality. Any great problem whatsoever, referring to Man's freedom, loses its value for him, as compared with the importance of his originality, which he feels to be his greatest treasure, the constant and never-deceiving source of true happiness, inasmuch as he can be happy.

If man desires to be free, it is to be able to act in conformity with his specific originality.

Any manifestation in its direction produces satisfaction ; any obstacle is felt as pain. Freedom and originality refer closely to the same reality, and claim each other. Originality is the base of an adequate development. Freedom is the possibility of that development.

Thus viewed, freedom in human manifestations means manifestation in the direction of one's own law, one's own specific originality, which becomes vocation, if matured through the contact with the surrounding medium. To see things just, according to the preceding definition, means to see one's originality.

The possibility of free manifestation is given to us by the spirit. It is based on our originality. Originality and freedom presuppose each other.

II. MAN'S VOCATION

This is the place to introduce in place of the sad idea of destiny another one, viz. that of destination, or rather that of "vocation," the first being too heavily loaded with the weight of destiny. In the realization of his vocation man is pre-eminently constructive-creative.

The vocation is fulfilled by a conscious human effort, not like destiny, indifferent to man's will. The specific originality, without being able to become something completely opposed to it, may be stopped in its development, may become a dry and shrunken fruit ; but it may as well take the superior form of a creative life. It depends only on the spirit, if that one can impose its light with evidence, or if it cannot. Now, there are ways to help the spirit. Man has felt it instinctively from the very beginning. Hence the necessity of education. Education is the way, followed deliberately by the human being in the realization of his mission in the fulfilment of his vocation. From this point of view, education may be called the process which helps to spiritualize our psychophysical being.

Vocation has a twofold aspect: the vocation of man as such, of man as a species, and the vocation of man as an individual. Inasmuch as man is "spirit," there resides within him the possibility of the realization of the human general ; but inasmuch as man is "soul," i.e. individualized spirit through its union with matter, we find in him the individual inclination to fulfil the human general and superior. The vocation as individual and the vocation of the species are fulfilled in the same person in an individual way.

Man's vocation is to represent the human superior, which is but the vocation of man as a species, in an individual form, the form which corresponds to his specific originality. In this process of individualization of the human superior must intervene all the intermediate spheres, as nation and other social formations.

But is it possible to gather into one formula man's vocation so as to satisfy all these points of view?

Is it possible to know, even approximately, in what that

human superior consists, and at the same time, how it appears in the specific originality?

In two famous lectures Theodor Jouffroy, a French philosopher of the XIX Century, spoke about "The Problem of Man's Destiny" and "The Method to Solve the Preceding Problem."¹ He believes that history, seen through the prism of man's self-knowledge, may show the "law which governs humanity." History alone, at any rate, cannot solve the problem: "One thing, therefore, is more evident than the light of day," says Jouffroy, "that is, that the historical facts, such as they are represented by mere erudition, are not sufficient to solve the problem of the destination of mankind; as long as no one has deeply meditated on the purpose of man and of society, these facts remain real hieroglyphs, the key of which we do not possess."²

With regard to this rather great historic optimism of the preceding century, relating to man's destiny, the most recent and most popular literature takes a quite opposed attitude. Nicoles Berdiaeff, a Russian writer, rather popular in Europe, sees in history "the failure of man, the failure of culture, the destruction of all human schemes; history does not fulfil what man proposes, and the meaning of what is fulfilled in it, is not understood by the human being."³

"In front of man," says he, "rises the class or the race, the idolized collectiveness or the State. Modern nationalism bears the stigma of bestiality. It refuses to recognize in every man a value, shaped after the image and likeness of God."⁴ The Russian, Italian and German (especially the last one) dictatorships are for him blemishes in the evolution of mankind. The bitterness caused by these historical phenomena, is projected upon the whole of history, which in his opinion ceases to have any human sense whatsoever. His historical outlook, as it appears above,

¹ "Du problème de la destinée humaine" and "Méthode pour résoudre le problème précédent."

² "Méthode pour....." in "*Mélanges philosophiques*," p. 361, ed. Hachette, Paris, 1875.

³ Nicolas Berdiaeff, "*Destin de l'homme dans le monde actuel*," p. 8, Stock, Paris, 1936.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

is too narrow. In this dark picture Berdiaeff is too much influenced by temporary apparitions of history, which are contrary to his religious and social convictions.

Compared with this attitude, it seems to us that Jouffroy is right. History is truly eloquent, if not reduced to a work of erudition. If we look in history not for facts, but for man who stands behind them, and if we shall start for this search armed with a maximum of knowledge about man, then the interesting phenomenon may happen, viz. that history as well as our previous knowledge of man, will enrich and elucidate each other. In this way history will be able to help us in the knowledge of man, and therefore in the knowledge of his vocation.

The history of education and of the ideas about education is especially rich in teachings, because in it are crystallized the real tendencies of mankind. The educational institutions and the opinions of the great thinkers about them are the synthesis of the purposes of mankind in their succession. The human superior manifests itself in an ascending line, in progress. The conquered ground is crystallized in moral values, which become thus compulsory, as opposed to the errors, to which the concrete man and society are subject at times. The moral values indicate the halting places through which mankind passed in their realization, such as the spirit has succeeded till now to impose them. In them we see the beginning of the rising line of man's achievement, following the way of his law shown by the spirit. The human superiority resides in them, and must go on along the line indicated by them, in an incessant realization.

But the general direction is given to us. The individual way of this realization is also given to us. A study of this kind shows that, symptomatically, man's vocation was always vaguely felt, even when not yet expressed clearly in theory, as a realization of a maximum of social happiness by way of a maximum of individual happiness. But happiness is but a symptom, a sign. It shows us something more important, i.e. the call on the road of realization, or the absence of that call. The different values, acknowledged universally by mankind (honesty, love of fellow-man, respect for labour, devotion, etc.) are for themselves signs

of the coincidence of the individual vocation with the generic one. Human society has always longed for certain achievements, the most perfect with regard to quality and the amplest with regard to quantity. The totality of achievements claimed by society from the individuals who are its members, is solved in the totality of professions.

The individual, on the other hand, could not wish for a greater satisfaction than a free manifestation according to his internal law, according to his vocation, however humble and little that vocation might be. It could be stated that the vocation of the human species is to reach the greatest social happiness (happiness considered as a symptom), and that of the individual to contribute as much as possible through the realization of his own possibilities, according to his specific originality.

To express this idea I tried to coin sometime ago the notion of "personality" as follows: *The maximum of development in a human being of his specific originality, within the boundaries of the social principle, i.e., within the boundaries of a productive harmony with the medium.* This formula shows the way of liberation of man, the way of the realization of his twofold vocation. He becomes a personality inasmuch as he succeeds in fulfilling it. Personality, thus understood, represents therefore man's vocation itself.

The realization of this imperative of the personality in everyday activity, appears in "the vocational profession," which is the maximum of realization of the social principle inasmuch as it is profession, and the maximum of realization of the specific originality inasmuch as it is individual vocation.

Opposed to this supreme purpose, all the others which may exist for the individual or for society, are but subordinate purposes.

But the happiness of mankind, as well as individual happiness is only a symptom which opens only a much deeper perspective. It is most wonderful how in vocation coincides individual happiness with the social one. But that only would not be sufficient. Happiness is in the end something which the superior man can renounce. It may appear somewhat paradoxical, but happiness

may be discovered by the superior man in all kinds of misfortunes which may arise on his way, leading to the realization of his vocation as an individual and as a species.

That happens because happiness is but a symptom in the realization of vocation. The vocation is the main thing. To fulfil it, man is able to suffer. The sufferance itself will seem to him much more valuable than whatever concrete goods would be offered to him to make him renounce it. Here appears the importance of the great example offered by Jesus Christ. Here appears the importance of the example which the great heroes of mankind offer to us.

Nothing is of greater value than vocation. The vocation of the individual must express the vocation of the generic man, the vocation of mankind. Upon that axis, individual-mankind, the nation appears like an obvious ring. The nation is an individualization and at the same time a socialization. Through the nation we come in contact with mankind, through the nation mankind communicates with us. Through his individualization man is linked with certain ancestors that have determined the elements of his specific originality ; further, through his individualization he is bound to a certain soil, to a familiar and dear landscape, to a culture expressed in a certain form, which all have contributed to the awakening of the spirit in that conflict, or what means the same thing, in that primitive and original embrace, which woke the spirit to life. That is why the spirit, which is the element of liberation, and in which the eternal and superior human is so obviously represented, is at the same time the national expression. Let us not confound the nation, in which the spiritual is predominant, with the race, which is a biological unity and which can be acknowledged only with difficulty, except in the case when we stop at the notion of civilized race.

The vocation of man is a synthesis of the vocation of the individual, of the nation, and of mankind. Thus looked upon, it represents the mission of peace and progress, the creative mission, which means freedom in the development of the human person, according to its specific originality, and through it simultaneously, according to the general human superior.

VAISHNAVA PHILOSOPHY

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Vishṇu is the immanent, all-pervasive Principle. This immanence or all-pervasiveness is not that of the trammels of inexorable laws—it is the embracing of a child on the lap of its mother. Philosophers have designated philosophy as the science of ascertaining the Truth by the process of reasoning and argumentation. But the derivative meaning of the word 'Philosophy' (*darśana*) is different. It signifies the direct vision or seeing (*dṛishti*), realization or experience of the Supreme Truth. It is to feel intuitively and taste the Ultimate Reality in the very recess of one's being. This *seeing* is quite different from an attempt to ascertain the Truth by reasoning alone.

By Vaishṇava Philosophy is meant the science of visualizing and tasting the Truth by a Vaishṇava (a worshipper of Vishṇu). Sāṃkhya, Pātañjala, Vaiśeṣhika, Nyāya and Pūrva Mīmāṃsā—these five systems of Philosophy have given prominence to reasoning, divorced from any kinship with God, and definitely attempt to attain bliss by eschewing earthly miseries. But the great sage Bādarāyaṇa does not recognize the importance of these above processes of reasoning to attain the Ultimate Reality, but holds that human miseries are finally terminated and liberation attained by the conscious realization of the Supreme Being.

Ineffable bliss or *ānanda* is indeed the real essence of the Supreme Being. The representation (*Śrī Vighraha*) of God is beyond ordinary human conception and reasoning. There is no other way to realize it except by worship.

Vaishṇavism embraces all systems but at the same time ever shines in its own distinctiveness. There can be no rest and peace of the heart without *feeling, realizing and seeing*. Vaishṇava Philosophy recognizes the All-powerful and the power as One and ever-playful, and serves to all an unceasing flow of divine bliss, which soothes, embalms and heals all souls. This bliss or love is what is called worship or devotion. Vaishṇava Philosophy

fulfils the very essential thing of awakening 'love,' which is man's real nature. No system of Indian Philosophy except Vaishṇavism has been able to tap the very fountain-head of that ambrosia in human breast. Vaishṇavism gives us a clue to that Viṣṇu, the all-pervading Love-Principle, Who dwells as the subtlest entity in all beings.

The bliss and joy which the Upanishads aim at are to be found in Vaishṇavism. So Vaishṇava Philosophy is nothing but the Upanishads. The *Brahma-sūtra*, which presents the salient thoughts of the Upanishads in a lucid and methodical way, expresses itself elaborately in and through Vaishṇava Philosophy. The Supreme Brahman of the Upanishads is identical with Viṣṇu of Vaishṇavism. '*Brahman*' means 'the Great.' The All-powerful God manifests Himself as this objective world of His own accord—this is the teaching not only of Vaishṇavism but also of the Vedas and the Upanishads.

Scholars are wrong in thinking that Vaishṇavism is a system of sectarian Philosophy. It is far from that. By "Vaishṇava" is meant one attaining the stage of the highest manifestation of Divinity. Judging by this criterion, all the people of the world are entitled to be called 'Vaishṇavas,' when they are able to know their true selves.

Many people say that the Upanishads primarily teach knowledge. But knowledge wedded to intuition is nothing but love or devotion. The realization of Bliss Absolute by an Upanishadic seer is identical with that of the Sweet Lord by a Vaishṇava. An Upanishadic seer has sung: "Thou art the dearest of the dear, the choicest of the jewels, we pray to Thee." A Vaishṇava's kinship with God is the same. Again, the seer sings: "He is Bliss Absolute; when the heart is filled with that bliss, the soul becomes Bliss Itself." It is then all sweetness. On behalf of the Vaishṇavas we say that this knowledge inculcated by the Upanishads is another name for *bhakti* or divine love, bliss or sweetness, which Vaishṇavism preaches so eloquently.

THE VEDANTIC CONCEPTION OF PEACE

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The motto printed on the cover of the centenary programme is highly significant. It reads: "*Ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadānti*" (i.e. the wise speak of the One Existence in many ways). This message of the ancient Ṛishis of the Vedas is the foundation of the Vedāntic conception of Peace. It is a simple truth, but it appears that simple truths are usually the most difficult to realize in practice. "The wise man," says Spinoza (the much persecuted Vedāntist of the 17th century Europe), "cannot die, but enjoys for ever the true peace of the spirit." He was right in holding that God was not a particular person, one among the many, but as Substance He pervaded the whole universe, that no particular nation or race or country could claim to have a special revelation of God, but that God revealed Himself in equal measure to all. In the same spirit, we believe that all religions are but different expressions of the same divine spirit, and that each provides within its fold what the other type promises to fulfil. In this liberal spirit, religions must be viewed as having their own pragmatic justification, so that no one has a right to prescribe his own type of religious belief to others, because rightly practised every religion leads to the same goal of perfection and freedom.

If this truth is realized in earnest, if people desist from unduly eulogizing their own religious beliefs while denouncing other types, if they bear in mind that the religious consciousness of mankind has revealed itself in various forms, which though different in expression are nevertheless of the same spirit, much of the world's troubles arising from intolerance, arrogance, aggressiveness and fanaticism and much of the unnecessary wrangling and futile controversies over the superiority or inferiority of certain religious types would cease, and that would necessarily pave the way to a better mutual understanding and to a more real contact among us.

The Vedānta teaches us that religion is life, it is experience, it is something to be lived and practised and demonstrated in one's

everyday life, rather than a sum-total of certain doctrines and rituals. Particular types of faith assume a fixed form as systems of doctrine or creed, and people generally regard them as the quintessence of truth. But truly something very much more than an implicit faith in the truth of such creeds is required. Mere faith in creeds does not help us much. The essence of religion lies in *realization*, in living the truths embodied in the doctrines, in making our life sanctified and holy. When we are honestly striving towards a realization of the religious spirit, we are already on the road to peace. Nothing possesses a higher spiritual value than peace. True blessedness is another name of true peace. The Hindus have been in particular desirous of peace, peace not only on this earth, but peace in the whole universe composed of no less than fourteen worlds. Whenever we find opportunities, we recite the well-known *Śāntipāṭha*, and our prayers, our lectures, our arguments, our discussions, our sermons end in the words, *Śāntiḥ, Śāntiḥ, Śāntiḥ*. This spirit of peace has pervaded our whole tradition. But its fulfilment can only come about if we follow our precepts, if we really live up to our ideals, if we lead a peaceful life, if our dealings with our fellowmen are peaceful. The very first requisite to the spiritual life is *śama* (peace). Peace is the alpha and the omega of the spiritual life. *Moksha* is another name of absolute and unmixed peace.

It is peace which the present-day world needs more than anything else. But peace cannot be secured merely by preaching it, especially so long as there is a wide gulf between our thought and action. Objective peace requires first of all subjective peace. Subjective peace comes about by practising the virtues of the spiritual path, described in the 16th chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. It is only when we practise truthfulness, honesty, sincerity, love, that we are qualified to bring about objective peace. It is only then that our dealings with our fellowmen are transparently honest. Nations no less than individuals need a definite moral training to be qualified to bring about objective peace with any marked success. You cannot work for peace with a sword in the hand. That means distrust and suspicion, which are the worst enemies of peace. The mere profession of striving for peace is not enough

to secure it. It must be accompanied by a strict moral discipline, which will purge the will of all feelings of revenge, vindictiveness, ill-will, exploitation etc. In actual life we generally try to take undue advantage of each other, we allow jealousy and vanity to dim our true perspective. Above all, we are all hypocrites more or less in our dealings with our brothers, with our fellowmen, with the world at large. We have developed the art of self-deception to perfection. So long as we do not throw off this cloak and practise truth and humility, there can be no hope for real peace. Hypocrisy is the greatest sin of the modern world, and when it is coupled with vanity, it is capable of doing immense mischief in bringing about our moral and spiritual degradation.

There is no gainsaying the fact that we live in a world today that is in no way happy. The spirit of discord and distrust is rampant. In spite of that, it is our duty to make every possible endeavour to bring about a better mutual understanding, and this Parliament of Religions is certainly a very laudable attempt to bring about such an understanding among us with special reference to our beliefs, and let us hope that all such attempts will be crowned with success.

RELIGION AND LIFE'S HARMONY

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We know that we are now, each a law unto himself, and would not learn it from a foreign source. Those who in bygone times sought it from a *guru* had less self-respect than we moderns have, and they were often so many dupes in the hands of wily and designing people. Our reason directs us in all our affairs, and who should so far forget himself as to allow his reason to abdicate its office so as to make room for foolish faith? The task of a teacher, therefore, is the most delicate in these days of individualism. Standing at the bar of reason and logic we want to face facts as such, tearing the veil of magic from off their face. We are thus a race of brave men who not only like to be our own

guides, giving the law to ourselves, but also want to challenge what we call the lies and hypocrisies which had shut out the naked reality from our sight. In this our bold attempt before which the past gives up its dead as dead that had been hitherto masquerading as the living and so falsely inspiring us, we seem to be merely busy with the present and its immediate problems. The present which might have its meaning and reality today may turn out to be false tomorrow. But this need not dishearten us, for the morrow may bring us something better, when the mere fad of clinging to the past would appear to be foolish. To adjust the claims of the old and of the new was the problem not only of King Lear: it is the eternal problem of human life, if reason be made its guiding principle, and not simply an idle veneration for the old because it is old. This is certainly the right attitude of the truth-seeker, and in so far as this attitude is the attitude of sincere and pure reason, it seems promising. But is it always the case that the old is decrepit and that we in the present-day world are all so many anxious and straightforward seekers of the truth, who are out to know and understand? Those who are truly honest in their challenge of the old find that the old and the new, the past and the present, are linked up together into one whole and that the attempt to divorce the two is suicidal. The present that never had a past was nowhere. The same law of growth animates the ages. But the dilettante who makes his quest of knowledge a mere fashion of the moment, a pastime to make a name, might blot out the past as a black mark from the white pages of his present achievements. To such an one the passing mood only presses its claim, while the law underlying all changes escapes his shallow gaze. When such is the case, theories begin to multiply, which come and go as so many shifting phantasmagoria, dazzling the multitude with their seeming brilliance at this moment, to fall into a dust heap at the next. The numerous *isms* which thus crop up as mushrooms blind us to the *is*.

Our own self-love which we mistake so often for love of truth is at the root of all this evil that threatens the real progress of knowledge. Vanity and truth never go together. Truth is meek and not fond of noise and fuss ; it retires when falsehood loudly

blows its trumpet and seeks to hold the field. And when the march of truth is thus sought to be retarded, we become busy with experiments, just for the fun of the thing, and not with the object of discovery for which all experiments are meant. We must experiment to find a truth, not to pursue a hobby. Experiments are not to be taken in hand in a light mood, as all scientists will tell us. But some of the leaders of the day all over the world think little of their experiments and they think that they may try them with impunity. The shy maiden that Truth is, then, shudders in her solitude, but waits, until all the newfangled doctrines and theories and experiments come to be swept away by the irresistible onrush of her power! Our faith in the eternal verities, though challenged, thus comes to assert itself, and before this triumph the truth-seeker has to submit himself and take his very defeat as his victory. This victory is another name for the realization that the *present* has a *past* and a *future*, the *here* a *whence* and a *whither*, that life is an endless unfolding, not a fungus or chance growth that depends on the sweet mercies of the most up-to-date law-giver. To find life and its phenomena a link in an infinite chain and so to understand its serious import is the right perception. Life is not a mere merry sparkle or a shining bubble,—the delight of the moment—but it has its deep shadows which it casts before and after, and the truth-seeker struggles, in all his sincerity and earnestness of purpose, to find the light behind. This struggle is not a mere sportive effort made in a holiday mood, but one long, painful and continuous endeavour that never flags. Our sciences and philosophies are so many expressions of that endeavour, and who may deny, without being perverse, that it has brought us at least a few sparks or scintillations of that light which man has been struggling to find since the budding of his reason or the dawn of civilization? The thunder of Jupiter is no more a mystery and finds us no longer as helpless victims before it, for we know how to harness Nature's forces to meet the same. Neptune may be angry and the winds may cease to blow, but unlike poor Agamemnon, we are not required to offer up our Iphigenias to propitiate the angry deity. Our diseases are no more the visitations of divine wrath which we must appease before we

may hope for recovery ; for they are all now traceable to definite causes which are controllable, and curable by the discoveries of a Pasteur or a Brahmachari. Our royalties or crowned heads have now lost their ancient glamour for us and they are no longer deified: but they are all so many mortals like us, who also have their foibles and follies. My right to live is my own right ; it may, for certain common purposes of the society, be temporarily vested in the king, but he must not think of using it as he wishes. In my spiritual life also, I do not find my priest to be a person with any mystery about him. He is as much a mortal as I am and has his appetites as I have mine. He may not lead me into the divine presence, unless I be fit. My own purity must be my guide, not another's. While representation may do in political or social life, nothing but actual presentation of my own strict account will do in religious life. Thus it will be seen how human reason is asserting itself in individual life, as a result of the culture which the age has brought with it. The saying, " where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise " is in itself a folly, just as the complacent faith of Adam in the prohibition of God was. If Satan stole in to disturb the innocence and happiness of life in Paradise by kindling the first man's desire to know, was he not doing the part of a friend (though without meaning it), just as Prometheus did, for having stolen the fire of Jupiter's altar? Those who help us to think for ourselves and so progress in the path of truth are our real friends today, and not those who only want us to submit to authority, however high.

With our reason and imagination thus kindled, we are trying to realize our high destiny as men. We are thus all grateful, and that in all sincerity, to those who have toiled all their lives and brought before us the fruits of their labour by wresting a secret here and a secret there from the great storehouse of secrets, which Nature is. But with all this progress and advancement, why are we not happy? Why is the cry going up from us, " Which way peace?" Why do we find ourselves in the same helpless state as marked the primitive man who was ever fearful of rapine from his more powerful neighbour? Why, with all our attainments and achievements of the head which have made us proud of our

modernism, are we still behaving, like the ape man, with our chatterings and grimaces? Alas! the reason is not far to seek. While the individuality and rationality of man has been awakened, his heart has been left to pine in a state of inanition. While the head has been busy in the laboratories, devising ways and means to heal the afflicted body and also to kill the blooming one, the heart has, like the forlorn medieval maid, gone on sighing for her true love shut up in her lonely tower standing on a perilous sea. If knowledge goes on raising its edifice busy ornamenting its surface, without caring to make the foundation deep and durable or the inside commodious for the happiness of those who come to live there, that edifice would prove itself a mere mockery like the old Tower which had been raised high enough, but fell into a ruined heap, as there had been only ambition at its source, and not love. With all our lofty talk, the jealous spirit of individuality has delved itself deep into our national life, and, in the name of the nation, we are today guilty of the most atrocious crimes before which the old, simple tale of savagery pales into nothingness. Even the awful reckoning, which had come as a reminder to proud man, not very long ago, that all was not well with him, has not been able to leave him better and happier. No doubt we have tried to take the terrible hint: and the poet has sighed, the philosopher protested, the statesman looked blank, while some of the finest poetry and philosophy has enriched our libraries. The wise politicians also have not been slow to raise a high structure and swell their mountain-high records full of their pious resolutions! But yet have men remained the same old warring tribes, only the invisible forces let loose by the scientist's alembic or the politician's portfolio have taken the place of the rude spear or the axe.

The progress of the head, which is undoubted, and which has gone to add to the amenities and complexities of life, miscalled happiness is not what alone will ensure peace and brotherliness amongst men. With the heart pining, the individuality of man comes to degenerate into self-love and he lives only in the hard cocoon of his selfish existence, lost to all true life which comes from a sense of contact with the Universal. Self-preservation is a moral virtue, but not self-love. The former is necessary to help

us in the struggle for existence, but unless kept within its natural bounds, it threatens to develop into a disease. While struggling for my own life, I must not forget that my neighbour also has a life to live. Self-love ignores that my right to live goes with a similar right of another in society. While everyone wants to live for himself alone, no one truly lives and grows and society hastens to its ruin. The ethics of individual life must merge itself into that of the national life and the national ethics should ultimately lead on to Universal Ethics. Ancient history shows how nations that had built up only their own systems of ethics regardless of the Universal ideal came to perish with all their grandeur. Socrates with his philosophy had necessarily to perish before the narrow, parochial outlook of his countrymen, and Christ with his gospel of universal love had to suffer crucifixion before the national pride of a people that boasted itself to be God's "elect." The intolerant Brahmanical code of our unhappy land did not breathe the true ethical spirit that binds man with man—it was the word of the Rishis whose eyes rolling in their spiritual frenzy saw *Īśa* everywhere, and also the universal ethics of Buddhism which really made Indian Ethics the admiration of the world!

If the civilization of the West is to endure, the Universal ethics of Christianity must be clothed in flesh and blood and not simply live its hollow and abstract life in the pages of the Bible. As it is, a dark spirit of heathenism now clouds the outlook in the West and the living spirit of Christ stands once more in danger of crucifixion!

The pity is that while we talk so much of reason and logic, we do not see the unnatural and irrational conduct of which we ourselves are guilty with our cult of selfish individuality. There is no room for pettiness or meanness in rationalism. A truly rational or scientific gaze is that which looks upon the individual from the standpoint of the Universal: it wants to establish a harmony between the two, for the one without the other may not stand. The individual without the Universal is blind, the Universal without the individual is empty.

Let us not hold science responsible for all our unhappiness and misery. The scientist who sacrifices his life's pleasures to

find out a truth is not to be despised as selfish. Who loves his fellow-brethren better than he? It is the misapplication of the truth which he has found after a life of ceaseless toil that divides man from man. In our anxiety to apply the findings of science to the promotion of our own comforts and pleasures, we have sadly missed the universal outlook of the scientist and so have let the heart starve and die. The heart draws the sap for its life, when it is embedded in the sense of the Universal, when it sees the One in the many and the many in the One. This interrelation of the individual and the Universal is not a mere abstraction which the poet, the philosopher or the scientist deludes us with. It is a concrete reality which has been perceived as such by those whose hearts have yearned for this realization with longings of love infinite. A mere imaginative or intellectual perception does not give us any more than an abstraction, and an abstraction as such may never be made to fit in with life. Life responds to life, and a mere abstract image of the Universal, unless blessed with the true breath of personal realization, may at best bring us but a temporary aesthetic joy. But he who has himself drunk deep at the perennial fount of beauty and joy brings us a message which goes straight into the heart and gives it new life. The Universal is not a figment of imagination nor a myth of old that has ceased to fit in with modern life, but it is as much a reality now as it has ever been. Only, our gaze which now looks at things piecemeal and in a haphazard way has been too intellectual and analytical. Hence all the trouble and strife of which the air today is so full. The remedy does not lie in the scientist's crucible, the poet's imaginings, the philosopher's consolations or the archives of the League of nations but in religion, in bringing forth our God-consciousness which is the highest synthesis or universalization of all our perceptions. Before this synthesis the particulars of our individual experience lose their identity and merge themselves into One, when we come to feel that

“ The One remains, the many change and pass ;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly ;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity.”

This vanishing of the many into the essence of the One is the vital principle of every true religion. One life, One harmony, One law moves through all forms of energy and so makes them kin. Differences and partitions which raise their high walls of separation between things, when viewed in themselves are all levelled down, as we feel within ourselves the presence of the One that unites. The jarring notes of different sounds which threaten our peace with their strange harshness melt away, when our ears get attuned to the One harmony which once chanted itself in the solemn music of the *Om* of prophetic realization. The lawgivers and statesmen all over the world, who seem so anxious for peace, but are yet divided by their mutual hatred and jealousies, will find themselves united, once they realize that all their differences are but the many modes of expression of the same Law which holds Nature together through all her diversities and forms. True religion will thus work for harmony by helping men to realize their God-consciousness and so enabling them to feel their mutual bond of fellowship. This realization is more an achievement of the heart than of the head, for while the pride of a soaring intellect discriminates and divides, the humility of a loving soul draws together and unites. Let the head soar, but let not the heart pine away in her solitude. She must also sally forth to find her own likeness in seemingly strange appearances! We find in the career of every religious prophet how his heart had yearned for the good of all, for is not the One manifest in all? The heart of a Buddha, of a Christ, of a Chaitanya, of a Sri Ramakrishna, of a Vivekananda has been the world's most priceless possession for the love which such a heart breathed into it has been still giving it its life and soul. As long as that love continues to shed its beneficent and healing influence on us, we shall stand blessed and fortified against all the evils with which we may be threatened. The celebrations of the centenary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's advent, which during the past one year were held in so many parts of the world proves that the soul of humanity is still awake to the great call of Love that had gone forth in the past from different religions. That call is not the phantom's dark or dubious beckoning, luring us to destruction, but it is that living gesture, which if

followed, will lead us into a world that teems with our very breath and longing. A Chaitanya or a Ramakrishna is not an idle visionary or a false guide but is a friend with a gripping sense of what is good for us, and we lose nothing in such companionship. It removes our hardness of heart and makes us see in the sun a sparkle, in the rose a beauty, in the mother's kiss a charm which no zeal of the analytical spirit may dissect. Life, under such influence, comes to gain in its sweetness and also in its width, it does not appear to be a mere drudgery or a slaving away to no purpose. Far from being a vanishing breath or a flying atom, life looks like an ever-expanding truth, being blessed, not only by the light that burns, but also by the light that mellows. While the flash-light of reason shines to show us what is dark, the soft ray of the heart also glimmers to enliven our knowledge and make us feel that there is beauty there. Under the softening and chastening influence of such spiritual friendship, our vanity and pride which had made our little success loom large before us and so had shut out possibilities of which we could take no count, hide their heads in shame. Who may be sure, with all his successes, of his calculations and forecasts about the happenings before him? The scientist, who sure of his findings and gay at the thought of coming on an unwary world with his surprises stands flattering himself, may find all his hopes suddenly belied. A sense of sweet dependence thus is another gain of spiritual life. Such a sense never militates against the truly scientific spirit. On the contrary it only strengthens the adventurer in the domain of the unknown. So not even the most learned of scholars need be afraid of losing anything, by believing in, and following, some religious or spiritual leader. Look at the great Swami Vivekananda of recent history. We all know the immense gain which was his for having been blessed by his Master. We know how with the beneficent light of the Universal Reality sweeping into his ken under the touch of his Master, the young aspiring soul lost his proud individuality therein and realized once for all, never more to be distracted by doubts, the harmony of his life—a harmony which he ever afterwards saw in others, after having dedicated himself to work it out in his lofty but sweet gospel of service.

Swami Vivekananda's case has also its strong modern appeal in another way. He has proved that religion is not a static creed, a blind acceptance of the word of any man but is a dynamic realization which shows itself in one's thought and deed, that religion is *not a belief* only but it is *life* itself. Religious faith, he showed, is as much a truth as any other. Atheism is irrational and illogical, for it comes to an abrupt end before it has run the whole gamut of thought-processes. The end, if seen, will be found to burst forth in its real glory, which a short-sighted vanity or indolence refused to see. And superstition or fanaticism which simulates as religion, is both irrational and immoral, for it hates truth and pretends to love God, while it hates man. But true religion is based not on dogmas but on laws and rules well reasoned out. The word 'science' is not the monopoly of the chemist or the physicist, but religion's claim to it is no less strong—for, what is that religion worth which may not stand the scrutiny and searching criticism of an anxious enquirer? It is a mistake to associate magic with religion and logic with science. There is as much of magic as of logic in both. The scientist would err if he thought and pretended that his explanations had given us the last word and that there remained nothing mysterious about this world or its plan. Similarly, the religious believer who claims only magic for his province and shuts out logic from the same does not know his own business, but he is a mere quack or miracle worker. If science and truth must go together as they must, is it not foolish to divorce religion which is the highest of all truths from the former? Swami Vivekananda had learnt and realized this, sitting at the feet of his Master. Religion, he realized, is not any sectarian dogma but a Universal Truth whose forms may and must differ but whose essence is the same. God is infinite and so manifests Himself in diverse ways which all ultimately meet in harmony. This message of religion being a scientific realization and also a living faith—which makes us see the One in the many, Unity in diversity, harmony in discord—is what we most require today. At this crisis in human history, when civilization and barbarism are contending once more for supremacy, when all sorts of theories and experiments are only landing us in confusion

without giving us any definite lead for true self-expression, we should do well to turn to the healing counsels which religion alone may promise. And who brings the fulfilment of this promise better than Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the mighty Master before whose fascination the sceptic intellect of many a cultured mind has surrendered itself, the Master whose own life of realization of the Universality and Harmony of Faiths should be the most eloquent reminder to the Christian, the Mussulman and the Hindu that they are all One?

THE RELIGION OF REALIZATION

SWAMI SHARVANANDA

Ramakrishna Mission

It is a most interesting as well as an important fact of religious history that all the great revealed religions of the world which command the allegiance of the civilized world today owe their origin to divine inspiration. All the great Prophets, be they of the Semitic, of the Indo-Aryan, or of the Mongolian race, proclaim with one voice that what they teach—their religion—was not developed from the intellectual plane or based on an intellectual comprehension of the Reality, but that It was seen, perceived, realized. As the time at my disposal, is very short, I shall not be able to traverse all the psychological ground in explaining the import of the word 'realization.' But I shall touch on one or two points. All along you have been hearing that the glory of Sri Ramakrishna was that what he preached was not from the intellectual plane,—his religion was not a philosophy of metaphysics—but his religion was the religion of realization. And you might have been thinking what is meant by the word 'realization.' What is its content? What is its force?

We find not only the Prophets, seers and sages of different religions keeping up the religious traditions, the fervour and the life of religion in the different countries in the different denominations

by their realization: there are also the priests, philosophers and professional theologians who all dwell upon the intellectual side, emphasize the intellectual and theological religions. The true force of each religion, however, lies in the lives of those great saints and sages who have proclaimed from the house-top as it were that what they speak is not mere intellectual quibble or philosophical disquisition, but religion, truth, realization.

We cognize this universe, this physical world with our five senses, and we consider this universe, this world of perception, as real. As some philosophers would tell us, the test of reality of an object is our abiding consciousness of it. It is our consciousness that gives value of reality to things and we think of this world as real, because we have a permanent consciousness of it, and this value of reality is given also to things that are somewhat conjectured, things that are somewhat rationalized with the help of philosophy. Even in science we would find that there are hypotheses and theories, for everything in it is not experiment and observation. These hypotheses and theories are not realized, and even so we find that the Prophets, the saints and sages have declared unequivocally that the truth they realized is the supreme truth. Yet the priests and preachers who could not attain that sublime height of realization would only say, "Have you faith in what is preached, in doctrines and dogmas." Religion naturally degenerates in the hands of these professionals. In the creed of religion, in the church of religion you notice that corruption creeps in, but true realization comes through different planes of observation. Human consciousness can exist in three different planes, viz. the physical plane, the psychical plane and the spiritual plane. The universe that we see and consider as real is the universe of the same plane. Because though we may rationalize and philosophize, here lies the ultimate unity of the material world for all practical purposes. The spiritual morality and the material plurality are the essential characteristics of the physical plane of consciousness. So however we may philosophize and however high we may soar in poetry, when it comes to the source of life, our poetic religion, our philosophical religion fails us. The physical limitations and other conditions of life are so

bitter and stern in the ethical plane ; when we try to assert only our intellectual conception of Reality, the physical consciousness asserts its reality with all its grimness, and we fail to fulfil the promise of our intellectual religion or poetic religion. Then we find intellectually—as modern science is groping to find and as every system of philosophy tries to assert—that behind the plurality of expression there is a fundamental unity. The material monism was an established fact among the scientists at the early beginning of the century. Among the philosophers the general tendency was to find out the common background for the plurality of this universe so much so that the philosopher and the scientist have now joined hands. They say that there is a common background behind life and matter itself. Mind has become matter and matter is nothing but the concrete expression of mind itself. Well, that is the outcome of intellectual analysis. So mind always tends to unity but we do not feel the unity. Yet, there are experiences, there are stages of human consciousness, in which our senses get sublimated as it were and the mind that looks through these senses comes directly to comprehend the unity behind the apparent plurality of the universe. And lastly the principle of consciousness in mind, what we call the Self or Ātman, the true spiritual principle in man, stands in its solitary grandeur divested of all its external implications of both the physical and the mental, and he realizes his Consciousness, the supreme unity, and that is what we call *samādhi* or superconsciousness. These different stages of spiritual realization we find more or less in every religion. That is the ideal of true religion—to soar to higher and higher stages of consciousness until you come face to face with the Ultimate Reality through consciousness. There is then the shifting of consciousness from the physical plane to the spiritual plane of consciousness, and this is realization. Of such realization Sri Ramakrishna stands as a glorious example before the world. He passed through the three different planes of consciousness—the physical plane of plurality, the plane of unity in diversity and the plane of the absolute unity in the highest *samādhi*. This is the basis of all religions. Let us strive to cultivate the real religious spirit by endeavouring to realize it.

THE DOCTRINE OF SELF-SURRENDER

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Of all the paths to spiritual realization perhaps there is none so simple to understand, so natural to weak mortals, so consoling in time of distress and so unique in its practical discipline as the path of self-surrender. Its innate sweetness and easy accessibility to men of different stages of development in different walks of life, its emotional appeal to the vast majority of mankind and its inherent power to annihilate the individuality and land one on the highest pinnacle of realization—these are some of the outstanding merits of the path that command the earnest and persistent attention of many great souls in various climes and among different races of mankind.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS OF THE DOCTRINE

Whatever may be our conception of the Supreme Being, whether personal or impersonal, whether with form and attributes or without them, it is admitted on all hands that the diverse world of matter and the myriads of souls live and move and have their being in Him. Since the very existence, the fundamental impulse for activity and the foundation of the universe of souls are all derived from the Supreme Being, it follows as a corollary that the relation between the individual soul (*jīvātman*) and the Supreme Being (*Paramātman*) is one of absolute dependence of the former on the latter, and that this relation is true whether in the bound or in the liberated state of the individual soul. The Śāstras declare in unmistakable terms, “ The soul is the property and Brahman is the proprietor absolute, of all souls,” “ All individual souls by their very inherent nature are slaves to the Supreme Being ; none other is the relationship between the two whether in the bound state or the liberated state of the individual soul.” The roots of the doctrine may be traced to the very fountain-head of all Indian wisdom, the Upanishads, wherein it is stated—“ This Ātman cannot be attained by fine speech, intelligence or

even by profound learning. Whomsoever the Ātman chooses, by him It is attained." Hence the pious belief, deep-rooted and widely prevalent, that an individual can save himself is but the offspring of ignorance, error and delusion as to the true nature of the soul and its eternal relationship to the Supreme Being. It is true that some great seers have described the soul as of the nature of bliss and knowledge absolute, but their emphasis has been rather on the external attributes of the soul's nature than on its internal and indispensable attribute, without which the soul becomes, as it were, non-existent. Those brave souls on whom has dawned the intuitive vision of the blissful and all-knowing soul, no doubt, attained deliverance from sorrow, bondage and rebirth ; yet this is only partial liberation and the higher religious life only begins with this soul-realization. The self-complacent bliss of the soul to which they are heirs blinds them to the consciousness of the truth about the indispensable nature of the soul viz. that the Supreme Being is the sole Proprietor, Protector and Refuge of the *jīvātman*. An insight into this true nature of the soul inspires the individual so profoundly that he is ever after engaged in the one act of supreme self-surrender and self-effacement. The knowledge that the individual soul exists solely for the service of God transforms his life into one of consecration to and a passionate longing for the selfless, joyous and endless service of God—a service which extends to and embraces all His children. The ecstasy arising from this continued selfless service to the Supreme Being, inspired by no motives of reward or enjoyment of this world or the other, but flowing out of the glorious realization of the eternal nature of the soul is the crowning achievement desired by all Vaishnavas and the consummation to which the earlier stages of soul-intuition and God-inspiration lead the earnest seeker after the perfect liberation. To feel that the individual soul is wedded for all time to the Supreme Being, the sole Master of the universe, in ties of perpetual service is the high-water mark of divine wisdom and illumination.

The other fundamental doctrine on which the theory of self-surrender as a means to soul-redemption rests is the doctrine of the Motherhood of God. The Supreme Being is conceived of in

Hinduism as both the Impersonal Brahman and the Personal God, as *Purusha* and *Prakṛiti*, as *Brahman* and *Māyā*, as the Father and the Mother of the universe, the latter aspect depending entirely on the former and both being entirely non-separate except in name. They are one as fire and its burning power are one, and represent the twin aspects of justice and mercy, both of which have to function in the Divine administration of the universe. The Lord of the universe, as its sole inspirer and sustainer, rules the universe according to the stern laws of *karma*, viewing with witness-like indifference the sorrows and the joys of struggling mortals ; but the Mother of the universe bleeding with mercy for the suffering mortals and yearning to redeem the souls caught in the rolling wheel of *Samsāra*, exercises the function of mediation for the sinners and seeks to win them over to the feet of the Lord by Her infinite love and grace. The one is the basis of being and the other the basis of becoming. The one corresponds to the Father, and the other corresponds to the Son of the Christian Trinity. The motto of those that reach the Father directly is tremendous self-exertion ; whereas the motto for those that wish to reach Him through the Mother or the Son is complete self-resignation or self-surrender. The Mother taking no cognizance of the sins or crimes perpetrated by Her children against the Father of all and being over-powered by Her mercy, inflicts countless sufferings on Herself for the sake of Her children and subjects Herself at times to the ordeal of fire and crucifixion. She is the connecting link between the Supreme Being and man, between the Infinite and the finite, and frees both from the slavery to the laws of *karma*, thereby awakening mercy on the one side and the innate purity of the soul on the other. Yet the Supreme Father is the means and the Mother acts only as the Mediatrix. She takes no part in the means, for plurality of means is opposed to the very essence of this philosophy. " There is only one means of salvation and, that is the Supreme Being Himself. The Mother's part where God is the means can be compared to that of a filter-bed which purifies the water and passes it on. The filter bed is not the means to pass on the water, but it removes the dirt and sends on pure water. So also the Mother withholds the sins

as the individual soul passes on to the Supreme Being. Even when the Father is the goal, She receives the service of the individual soul and transmits it to Him, magnifying and sweetening it." Although for the sake of distinction we speak of two aspects, yet in reality there is no difference, for the aspect of becoming is absolutely dependent on the aspect of being and both are really perennial fountains of grace, the former being grace potential, and the latter, grace kinetic. It is this conception of the Godhead involving the inter-related twin aspects of Fatherhood and Motherhood that lies at the back of the sweet philosophy of self-surrender.

THE PRACTICAL BASIS

It is common knowledge that all systems of practical discipline advocated by men of realization aim consistently and persistently at the annihilation of the ego and its activities, which is the sole condition for the attainment of salvation. The doctrine of self-surrender fulfils this aim by laying the axe at the very root of the ego not only with regard to the inherent nature of the soul but also with regard to the means of attaining liberation, and, what is almost unique, even the goal of final beatitude. The singular merit of this doctrine in its practical aspect lies in the triple renunciation of the *jīva* in respect of the ego, the means of protection and the goal entirely and solely in favour of the Supreme Being. The common idea in other systems of philosophy is that the soul being endowed with wisdom is a free agent who chooses either the performance or the avoidance of the prescribed spiritual exercises and who finally enjoys the fruit of his exertion in the enjoyment of the goal. But this philosophy establishes that this idea is quite erroneous and that the *jīva* is no more a free agent than any inanimate object and that the Supreme Being is the sole Proprietor, Protector and Refuge. Hence his very nature forbids the use of any means of saving himself other than God and excludes his own participation in the joy of liberation, since the joy of regaining the lost property pertains entirely to the proprietor and not an iota of it to the property. Further no finite means, however efficacious, can land one on the shores of the Infinite, and besides, the very exercise of the ego in practising

the means frustrates the purpose for which it is intended—namely, the destruction of the lower self. Nor will even a multitude of expiatory or propitiatory ceremonies be of any avail to remove one's sins, for says the Śāstra, "What graver sin can one commit than the sin of stealing the Ātman (that belongs to God) and making it one's own?" Thus the practical aspect of his doctrine affords not even the least scope either for independently initiating any activity for one's own benefit, or relying on it as a means or for enjoying its fruits.

THE DOCTRINE AND ITS SOURCE

The doctrine of self-surrender is a grand revelation made by Śrī Kṛishṇa to Arjuna and through him to the world at large on the battle field of Kurukshetra, and forms the final teaching by Śrī Kṛishṇa to his qualified disciple on the question of salvation. In simplicity and efficacy it surpasses all other means of salvation laid down in the various religious ordinances. The spiritual teachers of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism of the middle period down to the preceptor of Śrī Rāmānuja looked upon this teaching as a holy secret to be imparted only to those persons who by a rigorous course of spiritual training demonstrated their fitness to be favoured with the trust. They were never for casting this priceless pearl of Divine wisdom before the swine. But Śrī Rāmānuja took quite a different view and held that such a pearl of divine wisdom, the quintessence of divine grace, could not be deteriorated by being exposed to the gaze of unholy persons, even as the sun did not lose his glory by shining upon the stinking bogs in the slums in which the swine plunged and rolled. His generosity and overflowing love for mankind overstepped the bounds of orthodox conventionalities and he broadcasted the message freely and indiscriminately so that it might reach the sinner and the saint that may be willing to listen to it and rescue mankind from the thralldom of the worries of the world.

The necessity for this final teaching was as follows. Arjuna was sorely perplexed and grieved by the highly metaphysical exposition made by Śrī Kṛishṇa of how a man may reach the goal of life. The methods preached involved a physical and

mental discipline quite beyond the capacity of ordinary mortals. There was also the risk that the ardent pursuit of these means might lead to the ignoring of the ideal altogether and tighten the grip of the demon of egotism to the utter ruin of all prospects of salvation. Śrī Kṛishṇa divining the grief of Arjuna tells him as follows:—" Giving up completely all *Dharmas*, regard *me* alone as the means of salvation. I shall be bound to absolve you from all sins ; grieve not." The *Dharmas* here referred to are the diverse means laid down in the numerous religious scriptures to attain salvation, such as *Karma-Yoga*, *Bhakti-Yoga*, *Jñāna-Yoga*, etc., and Śrī Kṛishṇa advises Arjuna to give up the whole lot of these means as though they were veritable sins, even with a sense of disgust and shame for the past delusive apprehension of them as the means. This renunciation of the *Dharmas* is a *sine qua non* for looking up to God as the sole Saviour, since the *Dharmas* are in reality not only inefficacious as a means of salvation but constitute also a positive obstacle to the free flow of divine grace and consequent salvation. The egoistic clinging of the imbecile mortal to the slender means at his disposal not only cuts off his connection with the Infinite power instantly, but also strengthens the barrier between him and God ever ready to come to his aid. Further, when God, the goal of all our aspirations and endeavours, Himself becomes the medicine for curing the disease of worldliness, it is highly welcome and carries a charm ; and one is thereby relieved from the painful necessity of swallowing the bitter pills of hard austerities and stern self-discipline. Again, the discarding of all earthly *Dharmas* finds their true fulfilment and their consummation in the joyous embrace of the goal, namely God, the Embodiment of all *Dharmas*, as the means. Such is the very teaching of the Supreme Being Who incarnated with a view to establishing the highest righteousness on earth and gave us the immortal and priceless sermon on the battle-field, to wit, the *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE DOCTRINE

Self-surrender to God; while excelling all other means in its efficacy and naturalness, is also unique in its nature and transcends

all means as such. Here it is not a question of acquisition but only of acquiescence, since the means, viz. God is ever-existent and imperishable. Here the means is all-knowing and all-powerful unlike all other means. This method is not fraught with any danger and is entirely in conformity with the inherent nature of the individual soul. This involves no active effort, so to say, and is unfailing as a means of success ; but other means, whatever they may be, involve great effort on the part of the *jīvātman*, and after all, the success ultimately rests in an extra-neous agency, God. They are subject to risks and many pitfalls and are quite inefficacious as compared with the sovereign remedy of salvation herein proposed. Here one taps salvation at the very fountain-head instead of in the tainted courses lower down, known as *Dharmas*, which in reality carry one farther and farther away from the fountain-head. Here the supplementing of God by other means proves not only futile but also ruinous to the prospect of salvation. Here there is neither seeking nor striving but only the regarding of God as the eternal means. Even the effort in seeking God is discountenanced as savouring of egoism. Moreover, it is fundamentally wrong to suppose that the perfect God requires a consideration for His protection, that He requires to be sought after to induce Him to protect the individual. It is the duty of the *jīvātman* as one endowed with wisdom, merely to rest content with the knowledge that God is the sole means of salvation. Even the clinging of the individual to God in an attitude of supreme faith in His infallibility as the means partakes of the nature of egotism, as in reality it is a gift of His unconditional Divine grace. Whereas with other means the abstention from effort indicated is a bar to their success, here the application of self-effort is an egregious blunder and is a bar to the success of the means prescribed by this method. It is thus that the individual soul performs his own part of the great covenant between man and God, which consists in the abdication of all means of salvation followed by the prescribed mental adoption of God as the sole means in an attitude of serene quietness and unbounded faith in God.

THE PROMISE DIVINE

The other part of the covenant lies in God's assurance that He shall be bound, under the condition mentioned above, to liberate the individual from all sins. This promise has been vouchsafed to us by God in His Almighty and All-knowing aspect as the majestic receptacle of the entire universe of matter and souls and as the sole arbiter of its destinies. The light of His effulgence can pierce even the densest mass of the accumulated sins of many births. In reality the deliverance of the individual requires neither his effort nor even God's ; for at the very thought that God is the sole Saviour and the only means of salvation the sins fly away without leaving even the least trace behind them. The moment that all self-effort to secure one's salvation is renounced, and God's mercy is looked upon as the only refuge, all sins disappear miraculously. So long as one thinks that salvation rests in one's hands, God keeps aloof. But the moment we surrender ourselves to Him, we become a part of His body and the removal of the dirt of sins from His body becomes His concern. Again, since sins are after all only acts that cause displeasure to God, when He takes us under His protection, His displeasure is bound to cease and the sins that caused His displeasure are automatically wiped out. The truth is that neither the sins nor the virtues count in this connection, the grace of God being the only factor that counts.

ITS IMPLICATIONS IN PRACTICAL LIFE

The doctrine of self-surrender implies several features in practical life, which it is our duty to remember. First and foremost in practical life a single act of taking refuge in God by words, acts or contemplation with the firm conviction that He is the only Saviour of all souls constitutes self-surrender or *prapatti*. It is indeed completed by a single act ; for it will have no meaning if it is to consist of a series of continuing acts. Yet the continued remembrance of that one act is not objectionable and is even unavoidable, owing to the inherent bliss the contemplation of the initial act generates and the guarantee it affords against any relapse into the ante-*prapatti* state or the state before

self-surrender. Secondly, the act of self-surrender is independent of time, place or conditions and of all qualifications and purposes. At any time, in any place, and under any condition, whether pure or impure, irrespective of all qualifications on the part of the soul that surrenders and of all purposes held in view whether secular or spiritual, it can be resorted to by any individual ; but it bears fruit only when the person who receives it happens to possess the requisite qualifications of Masterhood, affability, wisdom and power. Thirdly, self-surrender may have its origin in a sense of one's own utter unworthiness and helplessness as in the case of the ignorant and the weak, or in a vivid consciousness of the inherent dependence of the soul on God as in the case of the wise ones, or in the overwhelming flood of *prema* or intense devotion to God which makes it impossible to entertain the thought of any means other than God, as in the case of the supreme devotees of God ; yet all the three types are acceptable to God. The vast majority of those that resort to self-surrender are of the first type ; the renowned preceptors of spiritual wisdom like Yamunāchārya and others belong to the second type ; while the Ālvārs of unparalleled frenzy for the Lord that transported them beyond the realms of body-consciousness and mind-consciousness into the pure regions of celestial effulgence come under the third type. Fourthly, making one's act of self-surrender a means to the end of God's protection is akin to the son's insistence at the age of adolescence on the father's execution of a registered agreement for his protection. The uniqueness of the path of self-surrender consists chiefly in the absolute intolerance of anything else or even itself as being regarded as a means. Fifthly, the indispensable requisite for attaining the fruit of self-surrender is our willingness to submit to the ever-active grace of God, based on the knowledge of the eternal relationship between the soul and God. The wind of God's grace may be incessantly blowing ; yet we should unfurl the sails of our boat, if we wish to profit by the wind and reach our destination. Sixthly, absolute self-surrender to the Supreme Being or complete dependence for one's protection on His infinite mercy implies a three-fold renunciation of all dependence upon temporal agencies and possessions

as means of protection, as source of enjoyment or as the goal of one's aspirations.

SOME OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

The exposition of the doctrine of self-surrender in the above-mentioned fashion is bound to provoke in the minds of novices in this line of thought certain queries, answers to which are undoubtedly conducive to the clarification of some fundamental principles of this doctrine. (1) At the outset it may be asked, "If the means such as *Karma-Yoga*, *Jñāna-Yoga*, etc., advocated in the sacred scriptures of divine authority including the *Gītā*, besides being ineffective, are positive obstacles to illumination, why are they preached at all?" The answer is that the various *Yogas*, pious acts and rituals are but restraints imposed with a view to breaking the erratic ways of the individual swayed by egoism, to enable him to gain a true insight into the limitations of his real nature. They are like the stumbling blocks attached to the necks of cattle that, spurning the grass awaiting them in the homes of their masters, break loose and graze the crops of others stealthily. (2) The objection might be raised, viz. "Will not the abdication of prescribed *Dharmas* imply or lead to the adoption of the proscribed *adharma*s or unrighteous acts?" "Emphatically not," we answer; for the performance of unrighteous acts is inconsistent with the attitude of self-surrender to God, the Personification of all truth and righteousness. The complete detachment born of surrender to God leaves no room for immorality of any kind. (3) Will not the act of self-surrender itself with its preliminary preparatory attitude of non-dependence on aught but God as the means constitute by itself a positive means? Why should the aspirant at all put himself in the frame of mind to regard God as the only means of salvation? Why should not God protect him, irrespective of this mental attitude? The mere receptiveness to divine grace or voluntary submission to its influence cannot be regarded as a means by itself for the following reasons: (a) It is simply the negative abstention from resistance unwillingly offered, in the garb of self-effort, to Divine protection. (b) Such an attitude of submission is an unavoidable

necessity in every system of religious discipline. (c) The individual soul is specially endowed by God with wisdom to appreciate the fact of soul-relationship, of which this attitude of voluntary submission to God's grace is a necessary consequence. (d) The same mental attitude is bound to persist even after attaining the goal. (e) It is entirely in keeping with his nature of absolute dependence on God. That which distinguishes the soul from mere matter is the attribute of wisdom which has to justify its existence by manifesting gratitude towards the Lord for His beneficent efforts on his behalf, and delight in His service. Further, His thought of us, rather than our thought of Him, is the means ; but it succeeds only when our thought of self-dependence vanishes of itself. Again, making the thought of self-surrender a means is like regarding the flower offered as a mark of respect and devotion to a mighty emperor by a beggar during his visit, as a fit price for the gracious gift of an enormous treasure bestowed on the beggar. It is a maxim in logic that the end achieved should be commensurate to the means employed. Lastly, if no mental attitude was deemed necessary, then we shall be driven to the logically difficult position of explaining why all individuals should not be indiscriminately absolved from sins, and why God's protection should take effect only at a particular stage and not earlier. (4) Why should not the word '*Dharmas*' be interpreted to mean optional *Dharmas* as opposed to obligatory *Dharmas* or the fruits of *Dharmas*? We answer, the construction is not warranted by the text of the verse and is a grievous offence against the very essence of the text which lays down God as the only means of salvation. The omnipotent means preached herein will not suffer the addition of any supplemental means (which tend only to stultify the act of complete self-surrender) just as the divine weapon, Brahmāstra, Indrajit hurled at Hanumān—which made him drop down in a swoon—lost its effect, when the rank and file of Rāvaṇa's army tied Hanumān with ropes. (5) Next, is the complete abstinence from *Dharmas* possible in practice? Will it not virtually tantamount to the suspension of all physical and mental activity? We admit that such activity is an inherent mental necessity ; but we maintain that our

objection to the practice of *Karma-Yoga*, *Bhakti-Yoga* and *Jñāna-Yoga* is only to the practice of them as means of salvation, but not to their utilization as modes of service to the Supreme. Since service is an inherent attribute of the individual soul and its cherished goal, unremitting service for its own sake with no ulterior motive of salvation or other gain should be the motto for the aspirant. His *karma* becomes transformed into service, *jñāna* (wisdom) affording the necessary illumination and *bhakti* or devotion supplying the necessary taste or longing for the service. (6) Is not this doctrine of self-surrender likely to breed indolence and spiritual barrenness? We humbly submit that neither logic nor experience warrants such an apprehension. The doctrine of self-surrender to God with all its implications of thorough renunciation of everything but God, when sincerely pursued, is bound to confer on the aspirant the highest wisdom. The sincere *prapanna* (the man treading the path of *prapatti* or self-surrender) becomes in course of time an embodiment of wisdom, renunciation and humility ; and his unbounded faith in God as the only Saviour provides him with wings that take him up to the spiritual regions where God lives for ever with him in his consciousness. So spiritual plentitude falls to his lot, instead of spiritual barrenness. Although logically speaking, no finite means can lead to the attainment of the Infinite, still practically speaking, exertion is not abandoned but is sublimated. The attitude of self-surrender only dispels the gloom of egotism and delusive self-effort but does not result in the abandoning of exertion as such. Every ardent follower of the path is intensively active in the sense that he is engaged in the continuous meditation on the grace of God, the ceaseless pursuit of some kind of selfless loving service for the sake of God or His devotees and in the unending endeavour to completely submerge the self and its longings in the Divine consciousness. As a matter of fact these activities arising out of his very nature become involuntary and spontaneous.

. CONCLUSION

To conclude, the gist of the doctrine is that service to God

and His creatures being the essential attribute of the individual soul, surrender to God with selfless service is the only means of salvation. The ordinary believer in God looks upon God as the means (*upāya*) and finite perishable possessions and achievements as the end (*upeya*); the man of ordinary devotion regards *Dharmas* and other finite methods as means and GóD or God-realization as the end; but to the supreme devotee God is the eternal means and the eternal goal of all his activities; this devotee makes the end the means. The progress of the devotee takes place in two stages. In the initial stage the egoistic attitude of doing action or *karma* with an eye to its results is sought to be displaced by the attitude of the servant or devotee of God by the constant dinning into the mind of the real nature of the Ātman—its '*śeṣatva*' or its existence solely for the sake of service to the Lord. In the later stage this preliminary purification is further enhanced, supplemented and perfected by the attitude of complete dependence on the Lord like that of non-living matter on the will of a living being. The servant ego, which is after all the refined individual ego, is sought to be merged in God's ego by the constant meditation on the essential and innermost truth about the Ātman that it is but a tool in the hands of God, with this differentiation that it is endowed with consciousness, however veiled, in its bound state, and can attain to the realization that it is a tool and its wielder is God. At this stage service is rendered for its own sake as a natural outpouring of the inherent nature of the soul, in much the same way as a rose plant produces flowers. Herein is the harmonious and simultaneous engagement of the head, the heart and the hand, the consecration of all our faculties to the ideal of service for its own sake. Here is a combination of idealism and practicality, of mystic contemplation and active service for fellowmen, and of *karma*, *bhakti* and *jñāna*. Since service is the life-breath of the *prapanna*, his one ambition is, as the great saint Nammālvār exclaims, "At all times, in all places and under all conditions, shall we do unceasing faultless service to our God, the origin of the whole universe." The only prayer on his lips is—as uttered by Śrī Āṇḍāl, the paragon of all devotees, in her immortal poem—

" Lord! we are all bound to Thee in all Thy manifestations in ties of intimate relationship both for the present and for all time to come. Hence ours is the privilege of perpetual service of all kinds to Thee and Thee alone, a service that Thou art bound to accept at our hands ; so grant that all our other desires are merged in that one supreme longing to serve Thee."

May it please the Supreme Being, by whatever name He may be called and in whatever form He may be worshipped, to grant that people of the world in increasing numbers be imbued with supreme faith in this ideal of self-surrender to God, with the spirit of selfless service and thereby uplift themselves and their fellowmen, making this earth an Eden like the Heaven above!

THE REALIZATION OF BRAHMAN

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Oh man! Do you know the value of your life? You are the inestimable treasure of the mystery of God's creation—you are to realize the importance of your life. You are the manifestation of the infinite power of God ; dive deep into the unfathomable depths of the Sea of Immortal Bliss. Salvation will come to you. The Supreme Consciousness within you will be realized in meditation. Sit down with an unflinching resolution. The Supreme Brahman or Universal Soul is the object of your love and adoration. Peace will come unto you with the attainment of Brahman, Who is ever Beautiful in all climes, in all ages, at all times and manifests Himself in the phenomenal world. Undaunted by obstacles and vicissitudes you are to realize the bliss of the Absolute. Meditation will guide you in your path. Peace, complacency and freedom will come in the journey of your life. Ye are the children and inheritors of Immortal Bliss. In the dim pre-historic past, your forefathers, the Vedic seers of India, declared: " Lead us from evil to good, from darkness to light." Deeply immersed in the bliss of the Absolute, they attained salvation.

Unless you whole-heartedly take to the Vedānta, and realize Brahman, you will lose all, and your births and rebirths will not cease. The very dust and atom, land and water, ether and the sky of India are permeated with the spirit, the religion, the dynamic truths, of the Vedānta. The only truth of Vedāntic India is Brahman. Be, therefore, initiated into the 'mysteries of Vedāntic truths: you find yourself deeply enmeshed in the riddling intricacies of scriptural texts and inexorable social laws and customs. Cut these shackles asunder and be free. You are to realize the Infinite of the Vedānta. If you surrender yourself solely at the feet of the Lord, all troubles and impediments will disappear. There is no way other than this self-resignation. Love Him with all thy heart, with all thy mind and with all thy soul.

The inspiration, which Śrī Kṛishṇa gave to urge Arjuna on to the great holy battle of Kurukshetra, is the vital inspiration of modern India. All the civilized nations of the world are eager to learn the synthetic teachings of knowledge and work that Śrī Kṛishṇa taught the warrior-prince Arjuna in the latter's hour of despair, misgivings and peril. Blessed are those that are inheritors of these noble teachings!

The future generations are looking forward to your guidance. The beaconlight that you will hold aloft will illumine the paths of the young hopefuls to their goal of liberation. The bliss that will come to you in the wake of your practice of religion and selfless work will be shared in by the men and women of the world. Do you forget the life-giving messages that Saṅkara, Rāmānuja, Kabīr, Nānak, Dādu, Buddha, Chaitanya, Rammohan, Keshub, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda gave to preserve the *Sanātana Dharma* and establish on a firm footing our national honour and solidarity? Don't you know that the stone-image of the Blissful Mother talked with Sri Ramakrishna in the holy groves of Panchavati at Dakshineswar? Will you sit idle and not strive for the realization of Brahman?

CHAPTER VII

SECTION VI

Religion and Social Service

THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY AS THE TRUEST FORM OF RELIGION

A LAYMAN'S VIEW

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Religion has two aspects—

1. Personal, which deals with man's relationship with the Unseen.
2. Social, which deals with his reaction to his fellow-beings, and his relationship with them.

These aspects, of course, cannot be separated from each other, and cannot be put into water-tight compartments: for social religion—our dealings with our fellow-beings—is intimately connected with our personal religion, with what we believe and what we consider to be the absolute standard. It is an erroneous notion which unfortunately is too common among people of all religions including Hinduism, that a man can turn his face against the affairs of the world and direct himself solely to what he regards as the spiritual life—to make his peace with God. No doubt, for a certain type of the superior man who has obtained a vision of the Ultimate Reality, it may be possible to detach himself from his surroundings, and to act as a spectator—as one who finds himself in tune with the Infinite, and rides above the storm clouds of our unhappy mundane existence, even as Lao-Tze and a number of other sages, saints and mystics have done. But even for such as these, it is a question whether their detachment is ultimately apparent or real. For the ordinary run of men, however, such a detached attitude is neither possible, nor can it be the right way. A man's personal religion must be there, as a broad base upon which he has to build his personal conduct, before his peace with himself and his neighbours and his successful striving for the attainment of the spiritual goal he proposes to himself become possible.

Many thinkers of the West like Auguste Comte have stressed on the importance of the social religion to the subservience and even suppression of the personal religion: they have sought to restrict man's higher aspirations merely to the service of his fellows, and have even attempted to quash faith or inner religion—a belief in a Godhead and prayer to, and meditation on, it—as a relic of primitive mentality. This atheistic-altruistic attitude we find in an extreme and militant form in the Soviet State and Soviet mentality. In India, Buddha, according to one school of Buddhism, was a preacher of this message of a Godless altruism. Of course, Buddha believed in an ultimate reality which was *Nirvāṇa*. This *Nirvāṇa*, according to some, is a mere cessation of existence,—it is a nihilistic conception only; according to others, however, *Nirvāṇa* was something positive, it was a state which was not divorced from bliss—in fact, it was an ultimate reality conceived in happiness.

We have thus two attitudes well defined: altruism on the basis of an Ultimate Reality—good work and service, as the corollary of faith; and altruism independent of faith—service of man without postulating a God.

Most saints and sages of India, and teachers of all theistic religions have always kept the Divine Reality as the unescapable background, as the very basis and foundation of good work and service. In Europe from the time of the Greeks there was a leaning towards humanism. In later Greece though the pendulum swung from God towards man, Socrates and Plato were at the parting of ways. There is plenty of faith in both, but their greater interest would seem to have been in man and his ways, and their concern was to ameliorate the condition of man spiritually and materially, rather than to find out the hidden or mystic side of things, even though that had a direct reference to man himself. This attitude we find more pronounced in the Chinese sage, Confucius, who was a practical moralist with the definite aim of bringing about the ideal state inhabited by ideal householders, ruled over by an ideal prince who was assisted by a set of ideal officials. With the pragmatic sense of his race, Confucius shunned mysticism. The contrast between this practical (one might say material) altruism,

and the altruism of a benevolent and beneficent interest in man which is broad-based on a perception of the Ultimate Reality, very well comes out in a short conversation between Socrates and an Indian sage who met him at Athens, which has been recorded by Eusebius, the Greek Christian writer. The Indian asked Socrates what the scope of his philosophy was, and on being told that it was the study of human phenomena, the Indian smiled and said, "How could it be possible to study human things, unless one had the knowledge of the Divine?" This remark of the unnamed Indian thinker who met the father of Western thought gives us a glimpse of a very precious truth. Man's conduct can have a meaning only when it is based on a sense of the Ultimate Reality. Centuries afterwards, the Vaishṇava teachers of Bengal pithily expressed the same idea in four words, *nāme ruchi*, *jīve dayā*, i.e. love for the name (of the Lord), and then charity towards all life. The problem of this interrelationship between the phenomena of man and the conception of the Ultimate Reality has exercised the seers and sages of Ancient India. Why should a man love his wife? Why should there be service of humanity? The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* says that we can love our fellow-creatures when we love Brahman or the Ultimate Existence, i.e. the Godhead, or God, speaking in simple lay fashion. Christianity enjoins the love of our fellow-beings as we are sons of a common Father. Here this love becomes a moral duty enjoined by the Great Task-master. But in Vedāntic thought, love of one's fellows is not so much the duty, as the inevitable corollary of the idea that individual souls are differentiations of the same Great Spirit—the *Paramātman*. I must love my fellow-beings as they are through Brahman or *Paramātman* my other selves—because, in fact, they and I are one. And it would be only natural that when I have a true vision of such a nature of things, I shall feel at one with them, love them and serve them. All *jīvas* or individuals are forms of Śiva or the Godhead: and human love and charity, fellow-feeling and service can only be firmly based on an attitude like this.

The necessity of faith as the basis of conduct towards our neighbours, however, is not the subject on which I intend to

express my view, nor is it necessary for me to emphasize upon the importance of the moral life as the unavoidable preliminary to any spiritual endeavour. By moral life, I mean a life which is not divorced from the truth. What has impressed me as a man of the world is that the best way to prepare oneself for the attainment of the Ultimate Reality is the service of others. Serve man and you will serve God—this seems to me to be the last word in a good life. And this love of man is the inevitable result of the appreciation and inner perception of the Essential Oneness of All Life. There is a story of a saint who was found to have fainted away and to be bleeding from wounds on his back when he saw in front of him the lashing of a delinquent slave—so intensely was he feeling this sense of oneness of life. This is an extreme case, like the story of the stigmata of St. Francis. Nevertheless, the feeling of a broad charity and acting up to it can be set forth as the gateway to the life which is in tune with the Infinite. A life based on truth and morality is of course a preliminary requisite.

This fundamental doctrine of human conduct unfortunately appears to be commonly neglected, although most of the great teachers have preached it to all and sundry, and frequently have borne testimony to it with their heart's blood. This virtue has two wings, as the ancient Indian teachers have put it: a passive feeling of pity (*karuṇā*) and active doing good (*maitrī*). Mere profession of charity, unless it is made good by active service, is no use, and would appear to be just lip-service. Then there is the negative doctrine of *ahimsā* or non-injury, which in itself is a great principle no doubt, but is a first step only. Unfortunately in our lethargy, in our disinclination to be up and doing, most of us, particularly in India, make a good beginning with *ahimsā*, but stop there. But that is not the ideal of the true servant of God. He must be active. This is the lesson taught by the *Gītā*. God is best worshipped by work.

This great lesson India was forgetting, and it was the crowning glory of the great Swami Vivekananda, whose life in a way was a commentary on the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, that he with his clarion voice called forth the aspirants for spiritual life in his country to dedicate themselves to the service of their fellow-men

and fellow-women ; the service of the poor, the ignorant, the sick and the down-trodden—" of God among the wretched " (*Daridra-Nārāyaṇa*), as he put it—was the first duty of man ; and this ideal fortunately the Ramakrishna Mission has placed in front of itself, as an example to mankind.

Apart from the inner spiritual significance of this service, which need not be elaborated for those who are convinced of the Ultimate Reality and who look upon life in all its variety as a many-sided expression of the Great Spirit, it is plain that this ideal of service is of inestimable benefit for the bringing of peace and harmony on earth. The present-day movement against war is unquestionably one expression of this ideal of love and service. This ideal alone can bring selflessness among men, without which there cannot be true citizenship. Service and fellow-feeling are the great bridges to gulf the differences between man and man, which unfortunately have been created by ignorance and prejudice, which would not understand that the diversities of race and colour are God-ordained variations in human society, individualizing various groups of the same great race of man, and that differences in faith are but different ways of approaching God, which are as true as they are inevitable and which only bring out the great truth contained in the words of Christ—" In my Father's house there are many mansions." Hinduism took up this attitude in a spirit of broad charity, and was able through this to train up many backward peoples of Asia along the path of civilization and the dedicated life, in centuries gone by. Christianity fortunately for itself and for humanity at large used this principle of service as its protective salt, to counterbalance the exclusiveness of its dogma. In strange contrast with the dogmas of Christianity, which would deny salvation to non-Christians, there was this principle of love and service of man, with which saintly workers like Father Damian lighted up and gave a new spiritual content to the religion they professed.

As a layman, it would be impertinent for me to speak: but on this great occasion, when the representatives of different creeds, thoughtful men and women who have pondered over the duty of

man and who have found out a solution for themselves for the problems of life according to the teachings of their own Masters, have assembled here to fraternize with one another and to express their appreciation of the Great Message, which India once again delivered to Humanity through the mouth of Paramahansa Ramakrishna Deva, that all different religions are but different paths to God (*yata mat tata path*), I feel constrained to bear testimony to my personal experience of the great Truth which has been so nobly expressed by Swami Vivekananda—

“ In diverse forms, and before thy very face:
Casting these aside, where dost thou seek thy God?
The man who shows love to all kinds of life,
He indeed serves God.”

The universality of this noble sentiment is attested by these lines of Coleridge, the English poet, which seem to be an echo of the Vaishṇava doctrine quoted above: *nāme ruchi, jīve dayā*—

“ He prayeth best who loveth best,
All things both great and small.”

I close with the great prayer of Buddhism—

*Sabbe sattā sukhino bhavantu,
Sabbe santu nirāmayā*

“ May all creatures be happy,
May all be without any suffering.”

THE IDEALS OF THE BRATACHARI MOVEMENT

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Bratachari purports to present a complete synthesis of life. It comprises a complete philosophy of life, a complete code of conduct and a complete system of practical training and discipline for the building up of the inner life and character and for the right performance of duty.

It does not claim to be a separate religion in the current sense of that expression, but it has a very vital bearing on religion in that it is based on the quintessence of all great religions and is thus eminently fitted to promote harmony between all religions. 'Brata' in Bengali (Sanskrit 'vrata') signifies a solemn or sacred purpose or ideal which is pursued as a rhythmic ritual and 'chāri' denotes one who pursues a purpose or ideal. According to the Bratachari, the whole of life should be regarded as a *brata* and should be pursued as a solemn and sacred ritual inspired by a noble purpose which is at once spiritual and practical. The single *brata* or solemn ritual of life is divided into five *bratas* which, however, must be pursued simultaneously and not in separate compartments. These five *bratas* are:—

Knowledge, Labour, Truth, Unity and Joy.

The movement seeks to create a nation-wide discipline of common citizenship among persons of both sexes, of all castes and creeds and of all ages including children as well as old people, by developing a high standard of character, physical fitness in ideal and practice, the pursuit of constructive work, an insistence on the dignity of labour and a joyous community spirit through common participation in national dances and songs as well as community dances and community songs. Certain common formulas of salutation, mode of address and a common community well constitute its outward conventions.

The movement is intended to provide a complete philosophy of life and to appeal to persons of all classes and of all ages. To translate the five fundamental principles of Knowledge, Labour, Truth, Unity and Joy into practice every Bratachari of Bengal has to take 16 *pañs* (vows) and 17 *mānās* (don'ts). The most important and characteristic vows are those that relate to the dignity and indispensability of labour, and the development of healthy and clean living and cheerfulness of spirit. There are twelve separate and distinctive vows for the 'Chho-Bas' or junior Bratacharis.

The wars and conflicts, disunion and disharmony in inner as well as in outer life in the modern world are primarily due to an

analytic and intellectual instead of a synthetic approach to life and the pursuit of life in separate watertight compartments such as science and religion, physical, intellectual and moral life and to the complete divorce of the pursuit of life from the fundamental principle of rhythm and the consequent disuse and decline of rhythmic faculty in the average modern man and woman. As a result of this compartmental and fragmentary treatment of life, science and religion have been rendered sources of disunion and the life of the average man and woman has been repressed and inhibited in its most vital aspect of rhythmic self-expression and has in consequence been disintegrated and stricken with disharmony and dissension. In the sphere of education also the same fragmentariness of treatment has led to vicious consequences in physical, moral and spiritual training and the result has been the production not of whole men or whole women but of monstrosities devoid of the peace, harmony and balance which should pervade the inner as well as the outer life of the complete man and his relation with his fellow-men.

The Bratachari movement is an attempt to rescue the life of man from its present vicious disintegration and to restore to it the wholeness of ideal and harmony of conduct by making all humanity conscious of its true harmonious inter-relationship with the cosmos, with the world of humanity and with the traditions of regional culture and by furnishing man with a simple system for the attainment of inner self-discipline and national and international unification.

According to the Bratachari ideal all life is derived from joy and is based on joy. Every aspect of life, therefore, whether physical or spiritual, unless it is based on joy and on rhythmic discipline as a means of invoking joy, becomes unreal and disintegrated. Rhythmic training, however, must be directed towards a wholeness of ideal of life which is simultaneously spiritual and practical and this ideal is furnished by the fivefold *bratas* or ideals of the Bratachari, viz. Knowledge, Labour, Truth, Unity and Joy.

It is the simultaneous pursuit of the above five ideals or

bratas that enables humanity to attain to the wholeness of life and to realize the unity of all humanity as well as the inner joy of spirit. Without rhythmic training directed towards a common spiritual object there can be no achievement of mastery over self, no unification of life whether within the individual or amongst a multitude of individuals. Rhythmic training, therefore, is essential for complete and harmonious individual development and the establishment of national and international unity. In this aspect the Bratachari movement is a re-expression of the old Indian ideal and has a good deal in common with the Greek ideal of training in citizenship expounded by Plato.

The simultaneous rhythmic discipline of body, mind and speech is utilized to develop a passion for true knowledge, a passion for work and labour, a passion for sincerity and right conduct, a passion for unity and fellowship and service in national and international spheres and a passion for joy in every sphere of life, including religion and daily labour.

The modern divorce of religion from rhythm is an unnatural and unhealthy phenomenon. As Havelock Ellis has pointed out, even Christianity was in its earlier phases expressed in rhythmic worship and he has observed that when a real religion of the spirit appears, instead of mere anaemic religion of the intellect, it always expresses itself in some form of rhythmic worship or dance. Indeed even at the present day in many great religions the call to worship and the actual mode of worship take the form of rhythmic chants and rhythmic movements of the body. That deep spiritual urge always expresses itself in simple rhythmic dance and song is exemplified in the lives of such great saints as Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Chaitanya, as well as of members of the Sufi community.

The two most important factors of the Bratachari idea and practice are self-dedication in service of others and the vigorous pursuit of work and duty, individual as well as social. The rhythmic expression of the ideal of duty and work generates a resistless energy for its joyous execution and banishes apathy and inaction. Thus although based on a deep spiritual foundation,

the movement expresses itself in a vigorous pursuit of work and duty in the practical field and thus promotes the realization of inner unity by self-dedication in the joy of work and service. This aspect of the movement is now well known throughout Bengal. Wherever it has spread it has led to a widespread mass movement for village reconstruction work.

The Bratachari vows, dances and songs also constitute a simultaneous rhythmic discipline for the purification of the inner life, the control of subconscious passions and instincts and the achievement of self-mastery over the inner life. They also conduce to the harmonious building up of character as well as physical fitness instead of developing one at the expense of the other.

By restoring to humanity its birthright of rhythmic self-expression and presenting to it a comprehensive ideal of life based on the eternal spiritual factors—rhythm, joy and unity of all life, this movement is calculated to bring about the harmony of life and of religion in a sorely distracted world.

THE SPIRIT OF SOCIAL SERVICE IN INDIA

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India can justly take pride in being the first country which taught the world the Gospel of Social Service. It was Lord Buddha who first preached the service of humanity. For the welfare of his fellow-beings Buddha made the great renunciation. He gave up his throne, riches, family and everything he had, to serve the poor, the unhappy and the oppressed. With his superhuman nobility and boundless humanity he propounded a religion based on truth, love and service. The unique fame of Buddha rests on the fact that he attempted to achieve a synthesis between the earthly and the ideal by asking men to realize their spiritual nature through social service. So insistent was Buddha on making asceticism a mode of altruism that long after him, in

Aśoka's time Buddhism became a missionary religion radiating the gospel of social welfare, while Buddhist monks were pioneers in spreading culture and organizing social work.

In Hindu *Dharma*, *moksha* (salvation) is the ultimate goal of existence. But our *Sāstras* speak of the need of social service. We have a saying that "kindness is the root of religion." We Hindus, as a rule, have kind hearts, and we feel sorry for the poor and the miserable. But our kindness does not go further. Very few of us have a desire to serve our fellow-beings and to remove their woes. If there was the real spirit of social service among us, there would not exist in India today thousands of beggars and lepers and the untouchables that we see around us. One who really feels for these unfortunate human beings would never sit idle without doing some kind of service to improve their lot. One who is a true social worker takes delight in serving humanity. But unfortunately in our country, where the need of social service is so great, to the majority of people, life consists in eating, drinking, acquiring wealth and enjoying. Some have a desire to get fame and they do a little public work mainly to become well known. Indeed, there are some selfless workers but their number is very small. The Ramakrishna Mission has produced a number of devoted workers who are doing excellent service to the poor and the needy all over the country. Great credit is due to Swami Vivekananda for organizing this band of selfless workers. In India we have hundreds of *sādhus* and *sannyāsins* who are not doing any work and are burdensome to the public. So we have "the idle poor" in addition to "the idle rich." If these *sannyāsins* follow the example of the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Mission, they can work wonders in a short time. In the old days the Rishis used to have *āśramas* where they kept pupils and taught them for a number of years. In this way the Rishis solved the problem of boys' education in their time. The first and foremost work that the idle *sādhus* of our country should take up is the removal of illiteracy. Illiteracy is a curse and the sooner the country gets rid of it, the better for its progress. Until and unless this is done, efforts in other directions are bound to fail.

We have thousands of unfortunate child-widows, who are debarr'd by custom to take any active part in public life. If they were encouraged to do some kind of social service then we could very soon have a troop of workers for institutions of women. Supposing a good many of them take to nursing as their profession, then the long-felt need of good nurses in our hospitals would be at once removed. Not only that, these widows who live on the mercy of their relations would become self-supporting and at the same time they would be doing the most humanitarian work of serving the sick and ailing people.

If the Ranis and Maharanis and the other rich ladies who are doing very little useful work make a firm determination to take up the work of uplift of women, they can also become a boon to their less fortunate sisters.

Thus we see that we have a number of potential workers amidst us. But the spirit of social service should pervade them. It is true that no social work can be done without sufficient money. Our temples and their authorities have enormous riches. If this money could be used in social service, there would be no want of funds.

Mahatma Gandhi has awakened the spirit of social service amongst our countrymen. Gandhiji's social service is as great as, if not greater than, his political service to the motherland. There is not a province, nay not a district in India, where there do not exist social workers who have derived their inspiration from Gandhiji. The All-India Spinners' Association started by Gandhiji has opened a new field of social work in India. By establishing the Harijan Sevak Sangha Gandhiji has made it easy for his countrymen to take up the work of emancipating the so-called untouchables. He is trying to remove unemployment among the villagers by starting the All-India Village Industries Association. He is thus trying his utmost to spread the spirit of social service amongst his followers.

Even before Mahatma Gandhi we had Sjt. Gopal Krishna Gokhale to whom service of his fellow men was his life's mission. It was Gokhale who by starting the Deccan Education Society brought college education within the reach of poor but intelligent

students. Not only that, he also created an army of selfless teachers who devoted their lives to the cause of education and social work. The Servants of India Society started by Sjt. Gokhale is, as you know, doing splendid social work in all directions. Gokhale's influence was so widespread and lasting that even today we find the spirit of social service more alive in Mahārāshṭra than in any other province of India.

We must be grateful to Swami Dayananda, the founder of the Arya Samaj for spreading the spirit of social service amongst his followers. The Arya Samajists take keen interest in education and they are running several *gurukulas* for boys and girls in almost all the provinces.

Now we come to Christianity which is the fountain of social service. The life of Jesus Christ was full of acts of kind service to the poor, the outcaste and the needy. To the Christians their religion has been a great source of inspiration for social service. All over the world the Christian missionaries are rendering valuable service to that part of mankind which is usually neglected by society. The Salvation Army by its splendid organization of social work has rightly earned the appreciation of the world. We have much to learn in the sphere of social service from Christianity.

Now the question is: how to spread the spirit of social service in India? So long as men do not feel that it is their duty to lessen the miseries of their fellow-men, they will not take up the work of social welfare. If we wish that the next generation should be less selfish and more helpful to the needy, then we should introduce the spirit of social service in our children. At present the children of the rich and well-to-do classes have no idea whatsoever of the miserable condition of the children of the poor. The children of the well-to-do classes should be taken to the slums and shown how their unfortunate brothers and sisters are suffering. I know by experience that children are very kind-hearted and they cannot bear the idea of other children not being as happy as themselves. I am sure when children see the slums they would at once feel that they should do something to remove the unhappiness of poor children. This spirit of social service kindled in their heart would not be extinguished if from time to time they are

encouraged to do small services to the poor children. In schools also there should be social service leagues by means of which children can do some useful work for charitable institutions. The present social system is very much responsible for the lack of social service spirit. If the children of the rich and the poor mix together in play and in school, they would naturally try to help one another and ultimately there would not exist such a wide gulf between those who have and those who have not. I am sure children who are brought up in an atmosphere of social service will never become snobbish and selfish and they will always be willing to help others. We can try to spread the spirit of social service in the future generation.

WOMEN AND RELIGION

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What is religion?

It is a realization of the ultimate unity of which the world of creation is a manifestation, and conduct based on such realization.

Why is it that man alone cares for religion, and not beasts and birds?

Because man alone is endowed with reason, he is called the apex of creation. In him creation becomes self-conscious—he by reason of his rationality is formed to look for the First Cause, the Creator of the universe and finds ultimately his own unity with the Creator—and necessarily with the rest of creation. This realization can be attained:

By Knowledge (*jñāna*) through reason,

By Devotion (*bhakti*) through faith,

By Practice (*karma*) through conduct.

Which path for women?

The path of Reason or Knowledge was, we know, chosen by very few women like Gārgī and others of ancient times. Barring a few such exceptional cases women generally are not fitted by nature for this path.

The path of Faith or Devotion has been the most usual path for women through all the ages, women being by nature and constitution fitted for this path. But the hold of Faith and Devotion has been loosened today by the light-hearted luxuries, the catch of the cinemas and theatres and other hectic pleasures of the modern age.

Besides, the times are such that women should take rather to the third path, namely, the path of *karma* or Action—the state of the world today demands it.

Today the world is in travail. Men have forgotten God—and love and *Dharma* have left the world leaving hatred and *adharma* to rule. Men and nations are ready to cut one another's throat to satisfy their greed for power or pelf.

It is now the woman's job to restore love and religion to a world shorn of both and thus save the human race. Thus religion for woman in the present age is to save mankind from irreligion and annihilation. The human race is in need of the protection of woman with her characteristic motherly instinct today more than ever.

Science has added to the armoury of man, guns, gases, bombs and so many other infernal weapons. These have been invented by man for the destruction of man. Man today is rushing madly in search of newer weapons to kill his fellow-man.

Neither is Nature more favourable to the human race today. Let alone floods, typhoons, tornadoes and earthquakes, every day new and devastating diseases are appearing to give the finishing touch to the process of destruction started by man against man.

Can woman afford to look on unconcerned while this massacre of humanity goes on?

Women, since the beginning of creation, have cared for and looked after the health and comforts of men and in illness have nursed them back to health. This spirit of service of ailing

humanity at home transcended the limit of its four walls during the dark days of the Crimean War, when Miss Florence Nightingale of blessed memory came forward to help in tending and nursing the wounded soldiers on the battle-field of Crimea.

The example of Florence Nightingale soon inspired her country-women to follow her lead and to join the sisterhood of mercy in large numbers. And today we have the peace-time organization of the sisterhood of nurses comprising millions of women who have devoted their lives to the service of sick and suffering humanity. Is not this service of mercy also indirectly fulfilling the ideal of religion?

But I am ashamed to own that we have till today left this sisterhood of nurses as a neglected if not a hated community, as the Harijans of society. That is why we fail to find in this big meeting of the Parliament of Religions today any members representing that noble sisterhood. I do not, however, for a moment suggest that the nurses are free from all blame. They do have, like other members of society, their own faults and failings. But what I suggest is that with a little moral support we can easily lift them to a very high level and that it would be quite unfair of us if we fail to extend our strong arm to pull them up.

I demand, therefore, from this Parliament today its sympathy for the nurses and support to my plea for a moral and religious background for the life and activities of the nurses, so that they may be better nurses, better citizens and better servants of humanity.

Not every woman can be a nurse or a social worker either. But even within the household there is ample scope for woman to practise this *dharma*.

Turn for a moment to the world-wide economic distress, unemployment and starvation which are grinding humanity mercilessly and killing it slowly. Well, it is definitely within woman's power to help humanity out of this distress. Let her be economical, less luxurious, more hardworking and more of a help-mate to man than a burden, and a costly burden at that.

When men are so much depressed and oppressed, when nations and races are fighting and killing one another, when communities are ranged against communities, classes against classes and sects against sects, let us not add to this conflict the conflict of woman against man. There should be no rivalry or competition between man and woman.

Let woman look upon man in distress as a child, and just let her try to protect him from harm and tend him to a better state.

Woman need not go into the forest in quest of her religion, nor need she join a religious order for her salvation. Her religion and salvation lie in her daily life in serving, in helping and in protecting the human race.

Women are rulers of the home, and if they wield their influence properly on men they can certainly do a lot to minimize the forces of hatred and destruction let loose in the world today.

I am rather inclined to think that in this distressed condition of the world the Lord has condescended to reveal Himself not in the form of an individual but in the form of this Parliament of Religions, and that the Parliament's invitation to women to participate in it is a call to the womanhood of the world to unite and join in a world-effort to save humanity from irreligion and ultimate extinction.

SOCIAL SERVICE IN PUBLIC HEALTH

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The cardinal aim of life in Hindu philosophy is to merge the mind with the Great Infinite and to enjoy the bliss of that symphony. With such a basis as the background Sri Ramakrishna preached the unity of all life and all religions, and Swami Vivekananda expounded a synthesis of *jñāna* (Knowledge), *bhakti*

(Devotion) and *karma* (Service) *yoga* (disciplines in life) in one's relation to one's environment. The philosophy of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* was so interpreted by Swami Vivekananda that a *sannyāsin* or monk who wanted to realize the Great Self and not retire to forest wilds or to mountain caves could practise the *yogic* discipline in everyday life, if the devotee would place "service above self," and thereby attain the same goal. The foundation of the Ramakrishna Mission is an expression of this idea, where no less than 500 monks are now rendering unselfish service in various directions in India and abroad.

Unselfish service in the cause of religion has been an accepted principle in life in India since very ancient times, but organized social service, particularly in the domain of Public Health, has been of recent growth.

It is my purpose in this short paper to show that social service in the domain of Public Health constitutes an excellent avenue for the practice of *Karma-yoga* not only for medical men but also for the lay citizen. The rendering of service becomes a joy when one does it without any selfish motive and for the good of the community. The only gain which the worker achieves is a purification of his mind. As the mind gets purer and purer, the thrill and the joy of work sincerely attempted can be better appreciated than described.

In a country where only 7% of the people are literate the number of educated men who can practise this philosophy in life is not large. In a country where the average citizen earns an annual income of Rs. 40 only and where poverty and ignorance account for a major part of the misery, there is no better way of leading the life than by devoting it to the service of the impoverished, the suffering and the ignorant population. In a country where 25% of infants depart from this world within a year after birth and the death-rate from malaria, tuberculosis and other preventable diseases is appalling, what better avenue for service can a doctor or a social worker find than in raising the hygienic standard of living of the population? For a population of 360 millions, there are only 30,000 qualified medical practitioners in

India today. In a country where no compulsory Health Insurance scheme has yet been introduced and where a very primitive public health service is operating, there are enormous opportunities for rendering unselfish service in everyday life.

There are three categories of social workers in every country, viz:—

(1) Whole-time workers employed by the State.—There is very little of this type of organization in India today.

(2) Whole-time social workers like the monks of the Ramakrishna Mission, the Christian Missionary Societies and similar organizations.—The number of this type of workers is also very small in comparison with the needs of the country.

(3) Part-time voluntary social workers, who have to earn their livelihood and who devote their spare time to social service of different kinds.—The number of this type of workers is fortunately gradually increasing but is still lamentably low in comparison with the needs of the suffering millions.

It is well known that in this country the State is not yet in a position to undertake social service as widely as it is being done in Western countries. But, in spite of the widespread activities of the State in those countries, the citizens not only initiate but extend and supplement it in many directions. In presenting a few facts before you today, I wish to point out that we ought to change our outlook towards life. We must realize that when we are offered opportunities for rendering social service, we should come forward and devote ourselves to the task as much as we can, and that unselfish work of this nature does more good to our own mind and soul than to the community.

The stupendousness of the problem can be appreciated if I cite an example. Let us take the question of tuberculosis. It takes a toll of 1,00,000 lives every year in Bengal and one million lives in the whole of India. Out of a million people who are thought to be suffering in Bengal alone today, there are at least 30,000 children crippled through bone and joint disease. For this enormous population of mute sufferers, there are only 280 beds in hospitals and sanatoria to accommodate adults only but none

for the crippled children. In tubercular homes, the number of deaths among infants and children from tuberculosis is several times more than that from general mortality. A band of voluntary workers here is trying to render service in prevention, education and treatment. They are not only handicapped for money but also for workers and sympathetic co-operation from the citizens in various parts of the province. The cinemas in Calcutta are seen to be overcrowded by thousands of poorly dressed Indians. Do these people ever think of the sufferings of the enormous number of their folk? Where is that spirit of service which arises out of a desire for self-realization through *Karma-yoga*? During occasional upheavals of the spirit of nationalism you notice a spirit of service, but it is often like the quicksilver column, collapsing as soon as the excitement goes down. Where is that spirit of sustained work which is so necessary for elevating the mind and for enjoying the thrill of rendering unselfish service? Social service is only an avenue for service but the mind must be prepared by a daily exercise of the will-power and concentration. If this is done daily, the mind, after some years, will gain a momentum which is not likely to vacillate or collapse very easily under depressing circumstances. The temptations for name, fame and money are all there, but these ought not to affect the worker whose sole object is to cleanse and purify his mind and to feel the joy of communion with the Infinite through service to one's fellow-beings.

Our Western brothers and sisters are far advanced in rendering social service than our countrymen. When I think of the enormous amount of work which is being carried on by the Christian missionaries in India in the cause of rescue work, education and public health, I consider our efforts to be extremely poor in comparison with theirs. Men and women alike are devoting their lives in the cause of social service, in the domain of public health or otherwise. We have had more than one Woman Honorary Secretary of the Tuberculosis Association of Bengal belonging to the British race, who used to devote five hours a day for voluntary service. One of them happens to be the wife of a highly placed State Official and the other used to live here on

her own money. We have tried to find an Indian lady of that type for nearly eight years and have failed.

What is the reason for this difficulty in obtaining social workers of this type in India? Is it in the traditions or is it in our usual outlook on life? The people of this country have much more leisure than those of Western countries. How is it then that voluntary social workers, who are prepared to do sustained work of this nature, are difficult to obtain? There is fortunately more of this spirit among members of the medical profession than among the other professions, but still the response is inadequate. Honorary doctors in senior and junior capacities are always available in most parts of India, in connection with social welfare work, but the initiative for organized work is lacking in most places. An average citizen must earn money for his livelihood, but he has also plenty of leisure time. If he only utilizes this leisure for the uplift of his countrymen, so much misery could be reduced and so much unalloyed joy can be appreciated by the workers.

Organized work for social welfare requires the co-operation of all sections of the community. It is a problem as to where and how to begin to inculcate these ideas into the average citizen. Movements like the Missionary societies, Charitable societies, Women's organizations, Public Health societies, certain educational institutions, etc., are showing an increasing measure of keenness in social welfare work, but organized work in cities and mofussils is yet in a backward state. Where is that spirit whereby each citizen feels the pangs of hunger of the unemployed or the famine-stricken and contributes his share to the national fund by foregoing a meal as the German people are doing? Apparently they do not care to have a religio-philosophical inspiration in their lives to act as an incentive to these constructive mass efforts. It is more a spirit of nationalism which induces them to undergo such great hardships and sacrifices. Where do we find an expression of such a spirit in our people here? If it lacks here today, what is the reason behind it and how to improve the existing apathetic condition of the people. This apathy is as much evident among the youth of the country as among the elderly

people. This means that, in spite of a highly developed philosophy of service in our philosophical treatises and as practised by great workers from time to time, we have not yet been able to build a tradition of voluntary service, by men and women, in the cause of social welfare work. If it is not there, how can it be encouraged?

It seems to us that the inspiration for this service must begin at the school, where the teachers, in co-operation with the citizens, should not only educate the boys and girls in social welfare work but also initiate practical exercises for them. The Boy Scout Movement, the Bratachari Movement and others like them might form an interesting vehicle through which this tradition might be built up. But no tradition will stand on sure ground unless the guardians and the average public learn to encourage these movements. In spite of the large number of lawyers, doctors, students and teachers in the rural areas, why can't we keep the villages clean and sanitary? The voluntary labour of this human material ought to form the capital for a healthy transformation of the countryside. If the learned assembly present here can suggest a method of approach, not only my humble self but, I think, the whole country, will remain grateful to you.

I once went to one of the countryside places where there were practising lawyers, doctors and other educated people like them and where there exists a pretty big High English School with 300 boys. The compound of every house was found to be full of overgrown useless weeds and bushes, the roadsides were filled with jungle, and there was no proper drainage for rainfall and waste water. There were a Union Board at the place, a Sanitary Inspector and a State medical officer. At the same time malaria and every other preventable disease were rampant and invalidating large numbers of the population of the locality. Most of them had an enormous amount of leisure which could be transformed into productive purposes for the welfare of the society. Most of the citizens were educated Hindus, Mohammedans and Christians. It is surely a stagnation and apathy of the mind which could not be stimulated to electrify the body to take action, as I cannot assume any ignorance on their part as the cause for such inertia.

It is then the lack of a spirit of social service, of the spirit which comes out of a broader outlook on life and from a sense of responsibility of the citizen towards the community, that is responsible for this state of affairs.

Is education with a religious background likely to improve the state of affairs? Here again it is difficult to give a uniform religious background to education in this country, owing to the narrow outlook of people of different religions. Is it possible, therefore, to evolve a universal code of ethics and procedure, which is common to all religions just as all religions lead to one God, which may stimulate and maintain this spirit of service? If service is not rendered in a selfless manner, no true joy can be derived from the efforts and the worker will not be able to attain that state of approximation to the Infinite Soul which has been expounded so well in the Upanishads and the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. It strikes us, at the same time, whether it matters if a social worker who wishes to render unselfish service follows the religio-philosophical path or not. After all, *yoga* or the control of the mind can also be obtained by repeated practice and detraction from material attachment as can be had by devotion to God. Need we then supplant religious education in schools by an ethical code and a course in social service work? These are the problems which crop up in my mind from time to time. It is true that an enormous amount of work has to be done around us and that unless a genuine spirit of social service develops in the country, such work will be slow and primitive, to the detriment of the hygienic and other types of welfare of the population.

It has occurred to me many a time as to whether we can throw aside the dogmas of different religions and build up a universal religion of service, if possible through a synthesis of religions. The whole world is now so full of jealousy, hatred and strife that it surely needs a working hypothesis for ensuring international harmony through unselfish service in various spheres, be it in the domain of economics, politics, education, social welfare and the like. If religion is to be applied in the service of God's Kingdom on earth, it must be developed as a practical code of ethics, easy of practice in the everyday life of the human race,

irrespective of the different religious systems prevailing in different parts of the globe. If it can be put into practice, is it likely to prove an easier and more stable way of approach to international peace, understanding and goodwill than those put forward by several international organizations, like the League of Nations, International Women's Peace League, the Rotary movement and the like?

CHAPTER VII

SECTION VII

*Historical, Comparative and Other
Studies of Religion*

THE ESOTERIC SCIENCE OF THE ARYAN RISHIS

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It is a privilege to stand before an audience assembled from all quarters of the globe in this holy land of India and attempt to lift the veil from some of the truths discovered by the Rishis of old. The call had first come in stirring words some decades back from Swami Vivekananda himself and is still ringing in his published letters. But the Hand that moves and writes out the affairs of men did not inscribe my response to it ere this. Even now I accept the honour and approach the task with great diffidence.

During the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the Punjab some British tommies while digging up earth near an encampment found the live body of a *yogi* in deep trance. One of them more brutal than the rest awakened him by repeated thrusts on his body. With a return to the plane of physical consciousness in intense bodily pain, the *yogi* opened his eyes, lifted them to his assaulter and said calmly, "Thou art That," after which he fell down senseless and gave up the ghost.

This utterance of the *yogi* sprang from a higher region of consciousness than that of Christ's "Father forgive them." It flowed from the same level whence Jesus had exclaimed—"The Father and I are one."

This is not merely an intellectual assertion or the emotional effusion of poetic imagery. It is an ecstatic affirmation of knowledge and feeling combined, a simple expression of a great Truth discovered by the ancient Sages in their pursuit of Spiritual Science. Just as chemical truths are couched in formulas, similarly the Rishis used to make a few words called the *mahāvākyas*, i.e. *words of great import*, the repositories of great spiritual truths realized by them.

The quintessence of this Aryan article of faith—"That Thou

art,"—is contained in the parable of Jābāla. The story forms the fourth *prapāṭhaka* or chapter of the *Chhândogya Upanishad*. Its chapters are easy and delightful to read, casting a spell on the mind with the music and mystery of their language. Yet all who read may not enter into their inner meaning unless the key to that has been obtained from any master who may possess it.

The story of Jābāla runs thus:—The God-seeking boy of unknown parentage is accepted by the teacher as a deserving spiritual pupil through the touching test of truthfulness in him with regard to his birth. The rites of Initiation gone through, he receives his first instructions in outline, and is asked to develop and fill up the same in solitude and self-communion while tending cows.

Years roll by. The few head of lean cattle which he was entrusted with multiply into a thousand, fat, well-fed and strong ; and his task fulfilled, he wends his way homewards.

On the way a *Vṛisha* or Bull out of the herd speaks all of a sudden in human voice and calls out—" Satyakāma ! "

Satyakāma answers amazed—" Sir."

" I will teach thee of Brahman " says the Bull, and enlightens him, describing the First Step of Brahman as *Prakāśavān* or Manifestation. " He is manifest in all the quarters," adds the Bull and becomes silent.

Satyakāma proceeds, and at evenfall halts under a tree and lights fire. In the quiet of the darkening day the Fire calls out in human voice—" Satyakāma ! " " Yes, Sir "—exclaims Satyakāma with wonder.

" I will teach thee of Brahman " says the Fire, and forthwith describes the Second Step of Brahman as *Anantavān*. " He is Vest, Infinite and Endless in His Diversity. Brahman manifests Himself as Earth, Sky, Heaven and Ocean."

At dawn the next day a Swan came flying through the heaven, flopped by him, and called in human voice—" Satyakāma ! " Satyakāma answered astonished—" Sir."

" I will teach thee of the Third Step of Brahman. It is

Luminous. Brahman manifests Himself as Light through all regions gross of subtle—in the fire, in the sun, in the moon, in lightening"—thus said the Swan.

At night when Satyakāma was about to rest on the banks of a river a Diver-bird called *madgu* in Sanskrit—the literal meaning of which is the Cave of Self—flew near him, sat by his side and called in human voice—"Satyakāma!" Satyakāma answered in surprise, "Yes, Sir."

"I will teach thee of the Fourth Step of Brahman. It is Form or Body. Heart, mind, ear and eyes are He."

Next day when he reached his teacher's home and sought his presence, the master glanced at him and said, "My handsome! The light of the knowledge of Brahman shines in your countenance, who taught you?"

"No human being, Sir! What man can instruct one who has thee as Teacher?"—replied Satyakāma.

From this narration we gain a clear idea that the Universal Spirit is ever manifesting Himself; that He is endlessly Diverse in His Self-expression; that He expresses Himself from subtle spirit down to gross matter or form. In other words, God the living Light, projects Himself into Infinite Time and Space, in Infinite varieties and forms both physical and spiritual, animate and inanimate. At the most this is the simple sense of the words of the Bull, the Fire, the Swan and the Water-bird that we can infer. To penetrate into the deeper truths underlying these words we have to take the help of teachers who are adepts in Esoteric Science.

These have observed that Life-force is at the root of all speech, the living alone speaks, with each utterance of a word Consciousness or the Energy of Life within one flows up to the vocal cord and makes for sound or word along with the physical air as breath. So speech or word is life itself. The brighter the fire of life shining within, the more potent the sound or speech. Sound therefore is the conveyer of life: the word is the vehicle of the Primal Energy known as Life—rather of One who is the Life of lives.

Howsoever you think in words, they become pictures in the

mind. Your world is your mental picture of it made up in words: with the withdrawal of the mind from the picture it fades away and the world disappears.

The same is true of God's world. The Universe is the functioning of His mind in terms of words. By a change of the Cosmic mind or the Cosmic Word the World appears or disappears. The Universal Spirit known as Consciousness from His subtiest state of Static Calm and Inactivity steps forth and manifests Himself as Potential Energy, and thereafter passing through the intervening stages of emotion the propelling Force and thought or word becomes the Universe. By a process of Involution He reverts to His State of Calm Inactivity again.

It is a matter of daily experience to us both in the inner and in the outer world to find objects appearing and disappearing alternately. Yet even when they disappear they leave a sense of continuity of existence in the form of Potentiality or Latent energy. Here is a seed, for instance, which grows before your eyes into a tree, withers away after some time, and disappears. But we note that it does not disappear altogether, for it lives in the potentiality of appearing again in the hundreds of seeds at the top. This phenomenon acquaints us with the truth that there is an undying eternal existence underlying all things which is sometimes manifested as Effect and at other times as Cause. Thus appearance and disappearance are the twofold expressions of the Self—the *Vṛi*, i.e. *Vṛidhhi* and *Sha* or *Sesha* of *Vṛisha* the Bull. His manifestation is Dual in its nature, *patent* and *latent*. To disappear is for the Power or Potentiality to remain under cover, to appear is for it to blossom forth into visibility: and the root or mainspring of both lies in Eternal *Being*.

It has been said—"The word is God or *Śabda Brahman*." How that is so has been explained above. The Word is the flow of Energy, the current of Life-force, or Consciousness that is God.

The mind or thought-concentration of Brahman is the cause of the Universe. As many thoughts whose bodies are words,—as play in The Mind of God,—so many worlds are evolved. Every moment Brahman is manifesting Himself as millions of worlds—both in the material and in the mental plane, creating or

uncreating them by ceaseless thinking or unthinking in terms of words—unfolding the Dual Nature of His manifestation.

Sa tapo'tapyata sa tapastaptvā idam sarvamaśrijata.

The Cosmic Energy of Life which has been shown to be at the root of word is symbolized in the material world as fire. The Fire of Life is Word. Hence word or fire is depicted as the Second Step of God or *His vehicle for manifestation*. We shall come to this again later.

We proceed now to the Third Step, i.e. *The Mode of His Manifestation*. It consists in a rhythmic movement called the Pulsation of Cosmic Life or the Movement of the Great Swan or *Hamsa* with its physical counterpart of breathing.

The very movement in us of the *Hamsa* is our being alive. The rhythmic flow of emotion and thought creating anew each particle of our body is the movement of the Swan or the throbbing of life within us. Life does not imply the function of breathing only, but connotes going through the process of sensing and feeling, thinking and willing in terms of words and composing their living receptacles—the heart, mind, brain, throat, etc., as well as arranging or rearranging the atoms of the physical body into live nerves, muscles and limbs performing voluntary or involuntary action. This is the Symphony of Life—the whole gamut of it.

From the Cave of your Self, the Great Cosmic Mother or the Primal Energy of the Universe is stepping out in a rhythmic dance up to the very gates of your physical being, keeping every particle of it alive, and is dancing back rhythmically—whereto? Into the same Cavity of your Self—the Self that is not Ego,—the Self which is the Seer or Spectator from whom springs the Actor, the Person with its sense of separateness in the cell of the Ego, and its whole play of activity called Life. The Content of Life is your Emotion and Intellect, Perception and Sensation, Will and Thought, your Past, Present and Future, your Conscious, Sub-conscious and Super-conscious planes, your Powers and their display. It is the Cavity of your Self from which all these spring and which is the Fourth Step of Brahman. The division of Himself into countless Individual Selves is His last word in manifestation. In other

words Brahman is within you. To know Thyself is to know the One in all.

By reversing the process by means of concentration of the mind at different centres one turns the objective world into perception of it, perception into pleasant or unpleasant feeling for the same—feeling into the flow of Life-force and Life into Self from which it springs.

*Vāṅ manasi sampadyate manaḥ prāṇe
Prāṇastejasi teja parasyaṁ devatāyām.*

The above is the theoretical side of the Science of Brahman, the Symphony of Life, and is comparatively easy to grasp. But the Practical Art of Realization is yet another Music or *Udgitha*. That is The Song of Fire. It is the dominant note in the whole Chromatic Scale of Esoteric Science. Through the mastery of this, *yogins* attain Superhumanhood by awakening dormant Powers within the Self and moving in the rhythm of Brahman with *Ānanda* or Joy or Love and Union with All in the One.

I shall just take you up to the fringe of this Fire and finish with salutation to the Teacher who has guided me and given light and inner vision.

We learnt in the story of *Jābāla* that the fourth or last stage in the manifestation of Brahman is Form or Body:

Thoughts are Things.

The concentrated thought of Brahman takes the form of the Universe. Mind becomes matter. The knowledge of this is the basis of one more *mahāvākya* or word of great import.

Sarvaṁ khalvidam Brahma.

“ All this is verily Brahman.”

Established in this truth, firm in the faith that the root of all is Eternal Being, that every thing in creation is an Evolute of Brahman the Real—nothing is unreal or Illusory to them. Thus their interpretation of *Māyā* is quite different from that of Śaṅkara's interpretation of it as Illusion. Creation was regarded by the Rishis as Manifest Brahman, hence they could not possibly conceive of it as unreal, false or as an Illusion. In their lexicon the

word 'Māyā' stood for the Primal Energy or Power of the Conscious Spirit which is sometimes revealed and sometimes hidden in the forms of objects in the outer or inner world. Hence their principle in life was to make their daily acts conform to this faith. With that in view they not merely ordained that every mortal action of man be given a spiritual turn by dedicating it to God, but specific actions called *yajñas*, homas, or Ceremonial Rites performed in Sacrificial Fires were also prescribed with God as their direct Goal. In these *yajñas* objective rites were performed with a subjective inner look. This was called the welding of action with knowledge. It is in this sense that the *Iśa Upanishad* exhorts—

Tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā.

Discard the material aspect of things and enjoy. In other words, you need not leave the world and its duties or pleasures—only change the outlook, turn the objective into subjective, matter into spirit. This is the way of mortals to be at one with the Immortal Spirit—

Atha marttya amṛito bhavati

Atra Brahma samaśnute.

It has been said before that fire was adopted as the chief symbol of Brahman, Consciousness, or Life which is the main-spring of words. Hence in spiritual phraseology Fire is the Synonym for Word. The Physical Fire and *mantras*, i.e. God-directed specially potent words, were the soul and body of a *yajña*.

Fire was also classified under three heads—Gārhapatya, Dakṣhiṇa and Āhavanīya—the Domestic Fire, the Heaven-words Fire and the Heavenly Fire. The Gārhapatya Fire was the fire kept constantly burning at a place for use in domestic requirements such as cooking, lighting lamps, etc. To enfranchise the human mind from slavery to domesticity or material life, this very Fire was made use of with a resolve to turn the mind Godwards. Some little fire was drawn out of the Gārhapatya altar, purified with holy chants and turned into the Dakṣhiṇa Fire. The simple resolve to give a direction to the outwardly bent desires to inwardness,

to turn the matter-bound mind towards spirit is Spiritual Dakṣiṇāgni.

Finally this was transmuted to Āhavanīya or complete absorption in God-sense. Some fire was culled from the Dakṣiṇāgni altar and sacred rites performed in it—thereby transforming it into Āhavanīya by changing the Fire outlook into an absorbed Inner Vision of Spirit, Consciousness or Brahman alone.

The normal mind shines as Garhapatya Fire. When a push is given to the Life-Force to dispose the mind towards thoughts of the Spirit, the mind becomes Dakṣiṇa Fire, and when in the process of that it knocks at the Cave of Self it is turned into the Āhavanīya Fire. Mounted on this 'the last, the Rishis used to kindle the Flame of Brahman, scatter the sparks far and wide and merge in Him Who is the Essence of Truth, Light, Love. The Secret of this *sādhana* was the Esoteric Science of the Rishis. To master this was to be a Brahmin or at *one with Brahman*.

Is there a mortal who, like young Nachiketas on listening to This Music of the Fire as sung in the Upanishads, is not tempted to step on the Fire-lit path of human-fulfilment which leads up to Power from Poverty, to Strength from Frailty and from Death unto Deathless Divinity?

THE CONQUEST OF THE GRAIL

Mlle. M. CHOVIN

Toulouse, France

INSPIRED PLACES

A grave, powerful and mysterious impression emanates from places where events happened that unveiled man's superior nature. People then say these spots are inspired and the expression is right, because they speak to souls who contemplate them, as if they retained in the imponderable, the reflex of their heroic past. Mr. Maurice Barres rendered in unforgettable words this influence of vanished times:

" There are places where the spirit breathes! There are places that rouse the soul from its lethargy, places wrapped up, bathed by mystery, elected through all eternity to be the seat of religious emotion."

" And, let us not doubt it, there are throughout the world infinity of these spiritual spots that are not yet revealed, similar to these veiled souls of whom none recognized the greatness."

" For the soul these places are powers like Beauty or Genius. It cannot approach them without recognizing them. There are places where the spirit breathes."

—(*The Inspired Hillock*, Chap. 19).

This emotion, so well described by a great soul, is that which seizes religious thought in front of certain regions of the Pyrénées ariègeoises. As the Forum and the Catacombs of Rome keep the memory of the early Christian Martyrs, as the Cevennes are the sacred lands of the heroes of Reformation in France, the hills and the valleys of the Ariège guard the recollections equally precious of a nation of believers, the Catharists or Albigenses, whose doctrine was bordering Christianity, and who weré exterminated as heretics. The privileged places that sheltered the more advanced of the adepts of Albigeism, the region of Foix, the castle of Montsegur actually in ruins, Ussat, Ornolac and their grottoes, the hills of Thabor and of St. Barthélemy are still vibrant with the impressions they preserved of their passage. Every attentive soul therein perceives the resonance of things that asserted in the past, the precedence of spirit.

The recollections are there, wrapped up in the silence of the country, clinging to the paths of the hills, and mostly in the depths of the caves where the Catharist Chiefs had elected abode, and where they celebrated Divine Service! A sage and seeker, Mr. Antonin Gadal, watches over these vestiges of a departed time with a zeal and an attachment beyond all praise. His whole life is devoted to the protection of some of these grottoes whose history is an epic poem. He supervises the excavations that redeem from their diggings the buried testimonies, thanks to which the study of the ancient ages will become fruitful. With him, the

visitor can understand the fantastic labour of subterranean nature ; by their revelations appear, in their real majesty, those wide erections of whom some are imposing as cathedrals, and where occurred events humanity has no right to forget!

On a different, but parallel track, Mr. Otto Rahn, a foreign writer, with the sympathy of a comprehending soul, wrote a serious and very captivating study, where the Catharists and their doctrine survive. *The Crusade against the Grail* is a learned book where are grouped with talent and great knowledge the impartial information borrowed from records of the country and from historians, and the songs of the Troubadours, those poets of whom a great many were Catharists, or at least used to serve the doctrine.

Thenceforth, without descendants to sustain the flame of remembrance of the ancestors, the Albigenes are protected from the silence of oblivion: lofty and fearless minds have removed from their shroud the remains of their history.

THE ORIGINS

What is the origin of these Catharist people? At what date do we see them arise in the Pyrénées, win to their conceptions all the south half of France, extending finally towards the north, Belgium, Great Britain, and Central Europe?

To understand this immense spiritual movement, it is necessary to question the admitted ethnological facts, and to trace the origin back up till the prehistoric period. Notions which perhaps are vague teach us that a free and independent people, who lived in the regions of Caucasus, known under the names of Iberia and Albania, about fifteen centuries before our era, emigrated and scattered over the West in two branches. It is believed the oldest of these migrations, the Iberians, crossed Asia Minor, the north of Africa, and came to Spain, giving to this peninsula, gained from primitive tribes, the name of their own first native land, Iberia. The other branch, which formed the Celts, departed probably from Albania a little later and spread over Europe up to Gaul, England and Ireland. And, as Spain had received the name of Iberia in remembrance of the Caucasus Iberia, likewise England became Albion, and Ireland Albany,

these two names being connected with the primitive land of the Celts. Finally the Celts came down to Spain where they met the Iberians, and their joining formed the Celtiberians, apparently the ancestors of the Basque people.

This double migration spread on its passage the knowledge of oriental religions. In the West, these notions mixed with Northern Mythology and formed Druidism, which long ruled over Europe.

However strange it may seem, quite an active intercourse existed in antiquity between peoples very far removed one from the other. In this manner ideas circulated, the ancient religions and the new doctrines crossed distances and were propagated, like waves, generally from East to West. It is certain that in pre-historic times, the inhabitants of Caucasus had numerous dealings with India, Persia, Greece and Egypt, and that communications were established between the countries of Europe overrun by the Celts and Iberians, and the birthplace of the conquerors. On the lands thereafter people by the great Indo-European family which showed as much taste for travelling as ardour for metaphysical questions, these connections multiplied. As early as five centuries before our era, when Buddhism appeared, it was certainly known in the West. So was it for Christianity, which must have been brought to the Mediterranean coast of Gaul before the death of the first disciples of Christ.

In the III century, at the birth of Manicheism, a wide synthesis of the religions of the East and Christianity, this creed spread abroad easily. Did it not find the soil prepared by numerous generations? And did it not come to show to all these doctrines the bond that united them in a wonderful fraternity? It grew the more quickly because the oriental soul has the gift of accepting any novel doctrine, without renouncing the former one; it knows how to assimilate what is convenient for it without forsaking the ideal already shaped in itself by the attainments of the past.

DRUIDISM

Druidism, which seems to be the first comer in the West, in

the mists of pre-history, was all wrapped up in symbolism, and was originally transmitted orally, as was done by the people of the old ages. The Druids worshipped a great Spirit, Supreme and Eternal God. They admitted metempsychosis, and the transmigration of souls in multiple lives. Their still renowned human sacrifices had certainly the purpose of immortalizing the primordial sacrifice of the divine emanation, by which God gave life to the world. For, they chose for holocaust a high-class young and good-looking man giving one the impression of a God.

The oak was for the Druids the sacred tree. The priests lived in oak forests, where they celebrated their worship, as Abraham who settled amid the oaks at Mamre, and built there an altar to the Eternal (*Genesis*, xii. 18). If the mistletoe was cut with a gold sickle during imposing ceremonies, it was because the mistletoe symbolized the spiritual being that is formed in man and grows within him as a foreign plant, in view of the return of the soul to the kingdom of Heaven.

The Druid priests were sages, thinkers, seers, like the Magi and the Brahmins. Their deep learning in philosophy, pedagogy, and theology, placed them apart from the ruling classes of their country. Their authority was powerful and respected by the people. Mr. Carcopino, a historian, maintains that the Gauls, subdued by the Druids, were of a more advanced civilization than the Roman invaders of Caesar.

The first Christian missionaries had no hold on the Druids who were opposed to the new doctrine. But, in the III century, the Druids themselves received under their protection the Pricilliens, a sect formed by Manicheism and Gnosticism, already persecuted by the Roman Church. With an oriental basis the doctrine of the Pricilliens is supposed to have brought round to Christianity the proud descendants of the early Celts! Did the converted Druids become the perfect Catharists? And did the Bards and the Vates, who were the sacred poets of the disappearing religion, have the Troubadours as followers? It is quite possible that this supposition of Mr. Otto Rahn is correct, because from that time Druidism was gradually superseded by the Pure whose

doctrine spread victorious till the XIII century in Romany which included the regions conquered by the Romans.

BUDDHISM

But, before Manicheism, the influence of Buddhism was felt in Europe. Prior to our era, it seems, a head of Buddha was found in the south of France ; the *svastika* is commonly found in the Pyrénées, where it decorates ruins of altars dedicated to Apollon, and on doors of Basque houses. The costume of the Catharist priests was similar to the robes of the Buddhists, till the moment when the Perfect would suppress it, not to be recognized by the Inquisitors. Finally, it is recorded that some children were consecrated to priesthood since their early infancy, as is usual with the Tibetan Buddhists. These are practically tangible proofs that Buddhism had penetrated deeply into our Western Provinces. Even more evident are the traces of Buddhism in the sphere of thought. We will find among the Catharists, all the characteristics of Buddha's teaching—Pessimism confronting the material world ; ideal of perfection that guides to the liberation of the soul, to the deliverance from a sphere of misery; rigorous asceticism that hastens the detachment from earthly goods, the spiritual development and the evasion of the soul towards the Realm of Spirit. When the Catharists, taking hold of these conceptions of life, pushed them to their extreme limits, they were quite naturally considered as " the Buddhists of the West."

All these systems formed an important acquisition in the religious treasure of the peoples of Europe when appeared Christianity that met prepared souls, formed by many influences. As a crowning, the new doctrine came to implant itself on a compound of the ancient religions of India, of Persia, of the Hebrews, of Egypt, of Greece; when Gnosticism and the School of Alexandria joining in turn this immense mass gave birth to Albigeism, which was in reality, a New-Manichean-Christianism edified on the ancient wisdom of past millenniums.

THE CATHARIST SYSTEM

The scattered records remaining from the unhappy Catharist people, in spite of the destruction that beset them and their writings, emphasize the importance of these oriental influences, and make it possible to rebuild its system in its principal lines. These included Metaphysics, Ethics and a religion; we shall not be surprised to meet in these three groups similarities with the doctrines we just enumerated.

THE CATHARIST SYSTEM: ITS METAPHYSICS

It seems that the Catharist Sects were numerous. On certain points they differed one from the other, which is quite natural, considering the variety and the wealth of accumulated documents. But the Catharists were all agreed on the essential questions. They were understood to declare that the material world, doomed to suffering, to error and to death, is evil. It could not be God's work, since what is created is identical with its maker. The heretic Garcias is supposed to have said, "God is very good;" "in this world nothing is good; thus God has not made anything that is in this world.....He did not create visible things. Nature in its imperfection could only be the devil's work."

But God being the primary cause of everything that lives, the devil himself was a creature of God. In this way, the devil could only be a rebel angel, and they called him Lucifer. Moreover, God being almighty, this evil-spirit could himself only act by God's permission; in view of this co-operation of two opposite powers, the difficult problem stopped at this conclusion: God had created the principles of the worlds, of the beings, and the things; and Lucifer was moulding the tangible universe and its inhabitants.

This dual theory they borrowed from the Bible of which they had probed the depths, gave to the Hebrew God the part of a subaltern divinity, and placed high up above him God the Spirit, the Absolute, the God of Love, whose sacred name the ancient races never pronounced.

So far as it is possible to understand the whole of a doctrine when the essentials of its teachings have been destroyed, and when

the rest is lost in the contradictions of disputed evidences, the Catharists established a barrier between Spirit and Matter. This was perhaps their great mistake. They used to say: By his physical body, man is Satan's handiwork; but the spirit that animates him is of divine origin. God created him by a series of hypostases; the spirit of man is of the same essence as the Spirit of God; the spirit of man may communicate with the Spirit of God. But, for the Catharist people, man remained "an abyss of contradictions, the world's greatest enigma." According to Mr. J. Guiraud,¹ "One must not disregard the greatness of this theory which, by one side, blends with Christianity."

Dwelling upon the Bible, upon the Epistles, as much as upon the data of Asiatic religions, the Albigenses, without pretending to withhold the total explanation of the great secret of things, thus resolved the enigma: God allowed Lucifer to give bodily life to souls that had been damned in a period prior to man's arrival on earth, so that these fallen souls might re-ascend from the abyss where they had sunk. Rehabilitation for rebel angels of a far-removed past could only take place through pain and penance; thus was it necessary to detain them, by physical bodies in the material world, in the sphere of suffering. A legend showed the human souls as having forgotten, in a deep sleep, the path to heaven, and being only able to retrieve it after enduring the awful pangs of anguish that awoke them. In that way they reconciled the works of God and those of Lucifer, the acts of the spirit and those of matter, both really indispensable to the formation of the superior soul and to its return to its celestial home.

Quite naturally this theory involved that of transmigration, well known in all the Orient, and which the Catharists discovered in the Bible itself of which they understood the symbolism.² With an inexorable logic they considered a succession of lives indispensable for the purification of souls and for their perfection which could not be accomplished in a short time. Thus they arrived at a theory of Redemption full of significance. The Albigenses would not consider Christ as an expiatory victim. In Him they

¹ *L'Albigisme*, preface of the "Cartulaire de N. D. de Prouille."

² It was demonstrated in *The Bible and India*, that the doctrine of transmigration is contained in Bible texts.

saw the Son of God, a messenger of Heaven, a supremely wise Master, whose teachings guided mankind towards the path of Salvation, yet not taking from them the duty of their advancing by strenuous personal effort.

Mr. Guiraud who had little sympathy for the Catharists, stated as follows their conception of Redemption, in his *L'Albegeisme*:

"According to the Catharists, Redemption had nothing of a sin-offering. It was useless for the Saviour to suffer . . . The revolt of the souls having taken place in Heaven . . . they could not be redeemed by corporal sufferings. . . . Their punishment consisted in the domination of Satan, which would last as long as souls remained in oblivion of their celestial origins and destinies. Ignorance was responsible for all the misery of humankind. Deliverance would be obtained through science of their real origins, of their real destinies, the knowledge of the true God, and the revelation of the mystery of their divine soul captive in an impure and devilish body. The mission of Christ consisted in his Teachings. Redemption was a preaching and not an expiation. Christ was not the holocaust slayed to Eternal Justice for the salvation of mankind; but the Doctor who brought the Truth liberating the world " (p. 58).

Egypt like India had its part of influence on the populations of the West. A little statue of exquisite workmanship, all covered over with verdigris and representing one of the divinities formerly worshipped on the banks of the Nile, has been discovered in a grotto about Ussat—a fact proving ancient communications between Egypt and the Pyrénées. On the other hand, the respect of the Catharists for animals, which they refused to kill, is a rather possible reminder of metempsychosis, most particularly admitted by the Egyptians. We know that these people considered that human souls might sometimes incarnate in the bodies of our inferior brothers. When the Inquisitors suspected a Catharist, they compelled him to kill an animal; on his refusal, he was declared a heretic and judged as one.

Lastly, everything prompts us to believe that the taste for the science of the stars came to the Catharists from the Egyptian

knowledge of astronomy, very far advanced in the land of the Pharaohs. The contemplation of the heavenly canopy was dear to the Albigenses! In the shining fields of the stars they saw the homeland of liberated souls. Their aversion for the earth, the cursed planet, the haunt of all vices and all sufferings, was forgotten when they gazed at the splendid constellations on clear nights! Were they not the innumerable "mansions in the Father's House" of which Jesus had spoken? What consolation for these beings, after sacrificing everything in our inferior world of which they only knew sorrow and misery, to await the near future of their souls unfolding in those blessed islands of infinite space, for ever sheltered from the afflictions of the earth! Their sole ambition was to discover the "path to the stars" which must lead them towards the peaceful spheres where they dreamed of worshipping God in eternal Blissfulness! The Path to the stars, of which they had a glimpse at the end of the initiation ceremonies, became the supreme hope of these saintly souls who stepped towards death as one would go in the direction of a life of bliss.

THE CATHARIST SYSTEM: ITS ETHICS

The Morals edified on the impulsion of these beliefs could only be higher Ethics. They attained a kind of perfection where the most advanced spiritual Laws were summed up. In reality, the moral of the Pure was nothing but the most exacting Christian moral. The Catharists had a deep veneration for the teachings of Christ which they ardently followed as well as the Commandments of Moses which they admired without admitting that their author was the Supreme God. In imitation of Buddhism, the Catharist system included three groups of followers:

(i) The masses, who practised as they could the simple rules at their reach.

(ii) The sympathizers, who in principle held to the doctrine of salvation, and strove to rise along the austere steps of the observance.

(iii) The most highly gifted souls, the Perfect, whose part in

the Catharist Church was equivalent to that formerly played by the Fathers of the Roman Church.

Real militants of the holy priesthood, the Perfect, after reception of the Consolamentum, practised a number of inflexible and extremely severe rules: Purity of conscience and of deed in every act of life; perpetual celibacy; abstinence from any animal food, eggs, milk and fats being forbidden. They had no right to kill, either in self-defence or for their food. They owed complete fidelity to the doctrine, even up to torture and death. They used to say: "We lead wandering and harsh lives, we flee from town to town, like sheep amid wolves; we suffer like the apostles and the martyrs; and yet our life is holy and austere. But everything is easy for us because we are no longer of this world . . . 'Tis a stern life that the friends of God live, persecuted by the Church; but it costs a great deal to a man built of flesh and blood to be admitted in paradise." (J. Guiraud, *L'Albigisme* p. 73).

They lived far from the world, apart from their families, often in communities, and never went out alone, but two by two, as later on the Minor Brothers of St. Francis of Assisi would do. The severity of abstinence developed spiritual life in them; their state of purity and, often, of holiness forced everyone's respect and admiration. The Pure were considered as beings who had gone beyond our humanity, and had not to return, as they were elected to the glorious dignity of the Blessed. It even seems as if the success of Catharism, that spread over whole peoples, should be attributed as much to the doctrine itself as to the veneration with which the Perfect were surrounded, and to their near triumph in the Beyond!

They were called "The Good Men" and, speaking of them, St. Bernard said: "Watch their manners of living and you will not find anything more irreproachable!" This unquestionable moral superiority still subsisted in spite of the dark slander spread on heretics to ruin them.

Thus, wrapped up in integrity, in severe austerity, the Pure accomplished their supernatural mission. They preached, they consecrated people, they consoled, advancing themselves towards a triumphant end—the end from which there is no return! Their

radiance was that of holiness. When they spoke to the faithful with their voices weakened by fasting and privations, they set all souls aflame. Their baptism was one of Spirit and fire, spreading like a conflagration . . . So was their church built, which was a Church of Love!

THE CATHARIST SYSTEM: ITS RELIGION

Truly theirs was a religion of Love! "Love God and Love your neighbour," summed up for these disciples of Christ, the supreme Law of God Who is Love! For them Morals and Religion met in an inseparable whole that transfigured the acts of the present life, tending to the blossoming of religious feelings. The research of Divine Love was the constant preoccupation of the true Catharist, compared to which all human advantage was valueless.

Viewed from the outside, their ceremonies were simple. They held various edification meetings:

The Appareilhamentum, a kind of self-examination where general confession of sins was made, resembled the Confiteor and the confession practised in the Reformed Churches. A Perfect then gave the order of penance, and bestowed Absolution on the repentant souls. The Pure, having in them the Spirit of God, had the right of forgiving sins!

The Melioramentum assembled the faithful for the Adoration; they bowed down before the Perfect who represented the Divine Paraclete, being themselves clothed by the Holy Spirit. The Congregation renewed its vows of Loyalty, and asked for the Perfect's Blessing.

The Consolamentum finally was pre-eminently the rite of Catharist worship, the gift of the comforting Spirit; It was practised by the imposition of the hands, as in the Primitive Church. Like the Apostles, a pious Catharist would communicate by touch the Spirit that was in him. The *Consolamentum* was never given to children, but only to adults who had undergone long preparatory trials. By exception it was given to the

dying, who, by the fact of having asked for it, contracted engagements that bound them beyond the tomb.

You can still see above Ussat the grottoes the Catharists called the Churches, and where they celebrated the ceremonies of their worship,—places sanctified by the elation of the souls who came to receive their consecration, and by the suffering of those who sought refuge there from the devastating persecutions. When the *Consolamentum* was to be delivered, a great many torches lit up the darkness of the caverns. The faithful, before service, washed their hands as a sign of purity. Then the Gospel was placed on a stone covered with a white cloth. The Holy Writ was read, there would be a liturgy of the ritual, a preaching . . . perhaps the recital of formulas whose secret was carried away by the fire of the stakes . . . Then the Imposition of the hands, solemnized by the religious silence of the grotto, made of the faithful postulant a Transfigured Being, a Perfect! Finally invocations would rise up towards the huge vaults, perhaps also chants and words of adoration,—*Adoremus, Patrem et Filium et Spiritus Sanctum*—and then the congregation would retire after benediction!

According to some writers, here should be placed the Embrace of Peace, which was also given before communion. The women only kissed the Gospel which the Perfect had kissed . . . All this strangely reminds one of the Apostolic times of the Christian Church.

The *Consolamentum* was, as a whole, the equivalent of baptism, of consecration and of extreme unction; an outpouring of Holy Spirit that purified, enlightened and consoled. The Paraclete was really, in the eyes of the Catharists, the Consoler of whom Christ had announced the coming, shortly before his death. Those who received it, whatever the sufferings of their terrestrial lives, lived in an inner blissfulness, compared to which every human anxiety disappeared! The means used by the Perfect for this sacred transmission of Spirit remain unknown to us. None revealed them, even through the horrors of "question" and torture! But their mystery remains, and their power has never been denied. During the great torments of persecution, when the

heretics were led to the rack, it sufficed, it is said, that the condemned saw from afar the uplifted hand of a Perfect in the sign of showing them Heaven in blessing them, for these unfortunates to march towards death, brave and restored to serenity.

THE ENDURA

So great was the effect of this spiritual baptism, on prepared souls, that it brought about real transformations in them; so assured was their certainty of a life in the Beyond, that the Catharists sacrificed everything to the ideal they had just found out. To reach it sooner, they would even commit suicide, the *Endura*, which was allowed to the Perfect men. It has no connection with Christianity. It is perhaps in Druidism that we must look for its origin, so far as it may not be of pure Catharist source.

The uncertainty and despair of terrestrial life led, in the doctrine of the Pure, towards an appropriate consequence: The spiritual world, the sole abode of bliss being next to unattainable to men here below, death was deemed the most desirable way of snapping the chain of cursed matter. And suicide, that would put an end to suffering, and open to pure souls the Heaven of Blessedness, was allowed to pious ascetics, but on certain conditions that were rarely realized. Only those who had received the *Consolamentum*, and had become Perfect, might put an end to their life by *Endura*. Even then they should not meet death half-way unless they be in a state of grace or ecstasy! Lastly, another condition still reduced the number of cases of *Endura*. Each Perfect had an elected Brother, as perfect as himself, a bosom-friend who never left him. Might he afflict his faithful partner by a premature separation, when it was contrary to the law of love to create suffering? They had to come to an arrangement . . . both had to consent to the supreme departure . . . be ready to leave together! One can see from this that these extreme cases met difficulties that prevented them from becoming a social plague. They were truly a very small number, those for whom death was "the magnificent hour" of deliverance, long prepared and waited for at every instant of their finishing destiny!

THE MINNE

The great revelation brought to the world by the church of Love, was the Blessedness of Spiritual life. The Albigenses gave the name of *Minne* or *Mani* (from *man* and *Manès*) to the raptures of ineffable communion, the exalted fervour of souls hereafter awakened in the spiritual sphere, and united to God. The *Minne* was Divine Love realized by the holy union of God and man's superior soul. The Mysticism of the Perfect saw in human love a symbolic reflex of the Celestial *Minne*. Given this resemblance, which presented to souls life in God as the supreme happiness, terrestrial love was recognized good, and allowed on condition that it remained strictly pure, and never left the sphere of feelings, corporal union and marriage being equally condemned by the Perfect, in their horror of tangible world. Willingly they declared it sinful to attract souls in the hell of earthly life! Chaste love, on the contrary, they considered as a virtue that improved people so long as it remained the pure image of Divine Love.

One may see directly what influence this conception of Love would exercise on the customs, even admitting that these sublime rules were not always observed outside the group of the Perfect. The respect for woman stood out greater; they recognized in her a divine being with prophetic intuitions. In the advanced souls, the observance of these rules of purity towards oneself and towards one's fellow-men, contributed to develop the inner life, and led towards the adoration of God, the evasion of the soul in the Spiritual world, the ecstatic experience, in short to the Buddhist *Nirvāṇa*, which is the annihilation of the physical being caused by the blossoming of the inner being of the Spiritual man, of Man become Blessed!

THE CATHARIST CHRISTIANITY

Scholars wonder whether Albigeism really formed a heresy, or was a new religion. Compared to the Catholicism of that time, in spite of all the points in common of the two creeds, Albigeism may be said to have been a religious system having its originality. The Catharists were Christians, but their Christianity, enlightened by other truths giving it all its brightness, was a compound that

really could direct them in the sacred path that Christ and the true worshippers followed. All their actions were inspired by Christ's example; the *Gospel of St. John*, more spiritualized than the three Synoptics, was their creed; in it they discovered the higher guidance, comprehensible to their souls already opened to the great truth which transcends our world, and of which they had an extensive knowledge.

Like the Lord who used to retire to lonely places to pray, they would meditate out-of-doors, in the solitude of the country or in the silent forests. Some centuries later, their example was followed by St. John-of-the-Cross.

Like the Christ, they loved to ascend the mountains and thence to instruct their disciples; they knew the power of the summits and the wide horizons on the inner inclinations.

In order to recall the solemn event of the Transfiguration, towards which they were straining themselves with all their might, they gave the name of Thabor to many hill-tops, amongst which is the one which rises above the grottoes of Ormolac, in their elected country. They had made a sacred place of it.

The Lord, down here, had no shelter to lay his head on; the Perfect chose to live in the discomfort of caves.

Just as Jesus instituted the last Supper, in the same way they reproduced it in their sacred meals, with the "bread of orison" consecrated by prayer.

Following his example, they fasted forty days by year, adding other fasts during the twelve months.

They revoked the baptism of John the Baptist, because this baptism of water reminded them of the immersion of Spirit, in hostile matter; but they aspired to obtain the baptism of Christ, who baptized with Holy Spirit and fire and gave life. In every way they strove to imitate Christ, their Divine Model.

Only fragmentary scraps from their doctrines have reached us; but, putting them together and analyzing them we feel surprised at the similarity existing between Albigeism and the Primitive Christian Church. This has been already called to notice concerning the Catharist ceremonies; some other remarks might be

added here: The very tradition of the Apostolic Church was continued in the Perfect by the transmission of Spirit. Full of Biblical quotations the Ritual of Consecration that escaped destruction has been compared to a "Manual of Orthodoxy" that might have been written by an Inquisitor. If we then say that this *ensemble* is closely related to the pure Christian sources and to the Protestant customs, nobody will be surprised at our attributing the origin of the true precursors of the "Huguenots" to one at least of the Catharist sects! "Catharist Rites of the XIII century," says Mr. Guiraud, "remind us of those of the Primitive Church, with a truth and reality which is greater as we get closer to the Apostolic age" (*L'Albigisme*, p. 86).

THE VAUDOIS

An important group of the Catharist people who marched hand in hand for a long time with the Pure Men transformed little by little the foundations of Albigeism to strip it from anything but true Christianity. Was it to escape the suspicions of the Roman Church that they practised Christian beliefs as a refuge? Or, more likely, did the frequent reading of the Gospels, the love for Christ Himself, put in the background the primitive doctrines that formed the base of Manicheism? It is difficult to surmise. But, in the XII century a swarm of Vaudois Catharists grouped themselves under a venerable Chief, Pierre de Vaux, or Valdo de Lyon. We do not know whether they took from him the name of Vaudois, or if he himself was called after the name of the sect that seems to have existed before him. In any case, the Vaudois renounced their designation of Catharists, and, after having travelled over Dauphiné, Provence and Piémont, proceeded in Central Europe up to Bohemia. A few gave the title of the Vallées Vaudoises to the regions of Northern Italy where they settled down. The Reformer Jean Huss who evangelized Bohemia in the XIV century was certainly a descendant of the Vaudois, because the characteristics of the Catharist people, compared above with those of the Apostolic church, would precisely be those that would signalize to attention a new heresy—the early Huguenots. These characteristics are mentioned below:—

(i) An independent spirit attracted by liberty, unable to endure the yoke of the Roman Church, neither its dogmas, nor any medium between God and man.

(ii) The recognized authority of the Holy Writ: the New Testament is supposed to have been translated in Provençal by Pierre Valdo, and spread about in proportion as this was possible when printing was not yet discovered.

(iii) In the same way as the true Albigenses, and following the example of the Iconoclasts, the Vaudois were opposed to the worship of images, of Saints or of any other divinity but God revered in Spirit.

(iv) The Vaudois were of pure customs. It is said that the charges made against some Vaudois for dissolute lives, can scarcely be taken into consideration; it is known that the tendency of every religious system, in the periods of obscurantism is to slander the rival churches and to ruin them. A life stripped of everything, simple and austere—such was the life of the Catharists; it was the same for the Vaudois and early Huguenots. Pierre Valdo emphasized the importance of poverty; he distributed his property to the poor and for the work of his mission; the Vaudois, disciples of Valdo, were called *The Poor of Lyons*.

(v) Lastly, it would be just to add here that the ecstatic experience, a common thing with the Catharists, but abandoned in the churches of Reformation, was, according to Luther, the natural condition of religious life.

The separation between the Vaudois and the Catharists was certainly the first blow given to Albigeism, the forerunning sign of the sinking where this noble doctrine would end. After the capture of Montségur, after the burning to death of more than two hundred Perfect and Catharist Knights in the "Cremating Field," at the foot of their vanquished fortress, the millenary science that was the real "Catharist Treasure" disappeared in the turmoil, carried far away from the new generations! Human evolution is so guided that the higher truths which accumulated during centuries, and which conducted their followers to the last summits, are removed in the Invisible; each surge of humanity that rises

must in turn discover them, and, at the cost of immense efforts, reconquer them.

THE CATHARIST INHERITANCE

When we consider this dramatic and impressive stirring-up of ideas we are not surprised that ancient beliefs that served as a base to Albigeism, should have subsisted more or less deformed or indistinct. Inevitably, scraps of a dismantled system could only survive in altering themselves. For instance, the pessimistic opinion of the Catharists on man's physical nature, which is itself an inheritance of Buddhism, will be met with again in Calvinism, but in a form which is even more pessimistic. Such an estimation is right in one sense: by his lower being, man is really a creature of the devil, incapable of any lofty feeling and living like an animal. But what was discovered incomplete or veiled in the rigours of Calvinism, was, originally in Albigeism, a theory full of hope: according to the doctrine of multiple lives, the soul, although enshrouded in its animal covering, would grow and ascend through the ages, like the plants, to awaken little by little after a gradual and prolonged development, and resume the path to Heaven. This was a dogma beloved by the Catharists!

Though less recognizable, there came to us under the idea of "Predestination," the theory of Impending Justice, inseparable from the system of successive reincarnations; both belonged to Albigeism, that summed them up in this way: Each being comes to the world with a destiny he must submit to, without being able to avoid its principal directions, since he must there meet the sanctions justified by the acts of his previous lives. Thus it is correct to say that each life is *predestined* to a sum of good or bad events, not likely to be easily modified. But this luminous truth of oriental origin, took a strangely grim appearance as it extended in the western countries: God created beings either for an eternity of blissfulness, or for an endless damnation, and no effort of man, nor any of his mistakes might change anything of this sentence without appeal! Predestination that was asserted in the XVI century by great spirits of Port-Royal, is scarcely admitted nowadays.

This short outline suffices to show the deformation of ideas, so often met with in the history of religions, and it teaches us the great lesson of things that escape all disasters because they cannot die. Though scattered and modified, the Manichean principles restored to their real meaning, shall revive into the imperishable truths of the Catharist system, to reassert the eternal value of vanished theories. Historical events teach us the same lesson: The Inquisition mixed up and persecuted in the same way the Catharists and the Vaudois connected with Christianity; it is recorded that heretics were sent by thousands to death or to renunciation. But if violence brought over souls to the Church of Rome, the fire still smouldered under the cinders of this apparent victory; an uninterrupted chain could be established between Catharist heresy and Huguenot heresy, which prepared, by this secret life, the vast conflagration of the Reform, in the XVI century.

THE CAUSE OF THE PERSECUTIONS

In these days when the Roman Church gives evidence of a comprehensive psychology of the soul's aspirations, it is difficult to understand its comportment in the past, towards brethren whose doctrines were so close to its own. Mr. Guiraud asks: "Does not Christianity also teach the rivalry between Good and Evil? Is it not entirely established on the mystery of Redemption? In its God, Single in His Trinity, do we not discover the hypostases and the divine emanations of the Catharists? Lastly, did it not make of monastic life one of the surest paths to salvation" (*L'Albigisme*, p. 211)?

To these questions Mr. Guiraud replies that it suffices to fathom the spirit of the Catharist and Christian doctrines to see that, proceeding from different inspirations they lead to the most contrary consequences. However true this appreciation, there were important concordances that must be pointed out, between the two organizations:

Were most Albigenses Dualists? But the Roman Church itself admitted the work of God and the work of Satan. The opposition of Good and Evil, of Spirit and Matter, of which man is a compound, has always been recognized by Catholicism; it

could deny it less than any other religion, having always maintained that the devil's power was contrary to Divine power, and despised the material world.

Redemption, according to the Catharists, was a long preparation that liberated man of his earthly ties, by purifying knowledge and suffering; it guided him to perfection that gives admittance to the Kingdom of Heaven. Was not the Roman Church teaching the necessity of moral progress, a kind of salvation by works and by penance? And is not the dogma of Purgatory, where it certifies that the soul purifies itself through punishments and sufferings after death, the negation of a gratuitous Redemption, as well as the picture of what takes place in earthly life where man meets the effects of his past actions and where he atones for his ancient errors till they be exhausted?

The only difference in this question is in credit of Albigeism which could not admit that the purification of souls could take place in the Spiritual world, *because it is the exclusive kingdom of God, of Good, where no one might enter unless he is perfect.*

Indeed the Catharists believed that man came over again in the material world in a series of successive lives, through reincarnation. Now the Catholic Church has the dogma of the resurrection of *the flesh*, asserted in the Apostle's Creed, and which is certainly a continuation of the doctrine of multiple lives, known in the Orient in the oldest antiquity.

The Roman Church gave as reason to the extermination of the Catharist people that Albigeism, condemning marriage and war was emptying the Catholic churches. Mr. O. Rahn writes: from the world and embraced celibacy, while the ordinary faithful lived and married as Catholic populations used to do, one is surprised at this reproach from a great Church whose clergy lives in celibacy, without family or descendants.

Finally Catharist ethics forbade to kill. The Perfect accepted to die, but did not kill. It is childish to ask if this be in opposition to the teachings of the Gospel that should be those of Rome. Only the *Endura* might be found fault with. But, we have shown

how this kind of suicide was rare, owing to the conditions in which it was allowed.

All this leads us to attribute the hate let loose against the Catharists to the jealousy roused by the success of Albigeism, that was emptying the Catholic Churches. Mr. O. Rahn writes: "The *Pure* doctrine accomplished, in the second half of the twelfth century, a regular triumphal march through the Roman provinces of Southern France; knights, citizens and even clerks discerned in the 'Good Men' the propagators of the true Gospel, and Rome nearly missed by a hair's breadth her domination in Provence, Languedoc and Gasconne.

"Nearly all the Barons and Knights of the country were Catharist believers, who received with deep respect the Perfect men in their castles, waiting on them at table, and entrusting them with the education of their children" (*The Crusade against the Grail*, p. 177).

In 1145, St. Bernard was saying: "The Cathedrals are without worshippers, the priests without honour, the sacraments despised, the festivals not solemnized . . ." He added that nearly the whole population had passed over to heresy.

How could the Roman Church not have been suspicious of a religion that was for her a menace? The brightest period of Catharism occurred when Catholicism was at its darkest. Had the Catholic clergy been able to fathom the depths of the Catharist heresy, they undoubtedly would have recognized therein most of the truths professed by their Christian faith.

But the ignorance of the Roman clergy, the love of luxury and the misconduct of the clerks enhanced the purity of the Perfect and their knowledge of religious questions. Instinctively the populations followed these leaders who extorted their veneration. Confronted by the swelling tide of Albigeism, Catholicism felt in jeopardy, and let loose upon the heretics the most awful hostilities, to save its life. Finally political questions got mixed up with the religious repression; it is even likely that if one could settle the respective responsibility of the Louvre and that of the Vatican, who both hurled on the peaceful southern provinces, the

populations of the North of France, the Church might be white-washed of a certain amount of crimes.

But we shall not intrude into this sphere that is special to history. We shall avert our eyes from the horrors of the Inquisition, originated to repress the Catharist triumph; we shall neither speak of the hecatombs of Béziers, Carcassonne and Lavaur, nor of the abominations of the torture-chambers, of the stakes, the caves walled-in on live refugees. Our study is of a religious order; we only want to depict here, not the bloody drama, but the value of Albigeism and its glorious ideal.

THE TROUBADOURS

It can be admitted that the Catharists lived for a long time without being mentioned, until Christianity wanted to impose its exclusive domination. Their beliefs, so very far remote, were quietly transmitted from generation to generation, every new acquisition adding to their "Treasure."

We must mention here the works of the Troubadours which seem to have proved a great help to the Perfect. As the Bards in the times of the Druids, these poets put their talent at the service of holy things. The Perfect accepted this homage. Besides, they considered intuition and inspiration as equally valuable; consequently they proclaimed that prophets and poets being under the influence of the Spirit, were all, without distinction, divinely inspired. In truth, at that time, poetry dealt mostly with sacred subjects, or epic tales where warlike and marvellous actions were combined. Most Troubadours enjoyed great consideration, whether they contributed with the Perfect to veil under poetic symbolism the truths asserted by the doctrine, or discovered themselves, as their name indicates, in the course of their wanderings and meditations, new information to be added to the knowledge previously acquired. Likewise a great many Troubadours were pure Catharists, and there were poets amid the Perfect, for whom prayer most naturally rose towards heaven under the aesthetic form of a hymn. This lyrical blossoming, inseparable from Albigeism, placed the Catharist mysticism under the

populations of the North of France, the Church might be white-washed of a certain amount of crimes.

N. Peyrat in his *History of the Albigenes* states: "The Manicheans were intoxicated with music and melody . . . Manes had composed several hymns . . . Catharism contributed to the poetic and music development in the West" (p. 397, Book I).

In fact, religious hymns in Christian worship did not appear before the IV century that witnessed the birth of Manicheism.

Although a great many works were lost in the tempest of persecution, still what remains allows us to believe that the resplendent period of Albigeism knew of an abundant poetic production. Around the central subject of the *Minne*, of the Supreme *Minne* and the Consoling *Paraclete*, a cluster of poets celebrated Divine Love and all the mishaps in the path leading the soul to heavenly life. We have said that human love, so long as it remained chaste, was considered by the Albigenes as the picture of Divine Love of which it was a reflex. The "*leys d'Amor*" were truly symbols in which the soaring of the soul towards Divinity was revealed, and the chanters of the Supreme *Minne* lead us towards the summits where ascended with difficulty the Mystics of the Middle Ages, whom a stern asceticism diverted for ever from everything that had a human and terrestrial appearance.

In Germany, the most renowned of these singers of the *Minne* (the *Minne-dichter* or *Minne sänger*), seems to be Wolfram of Eschenbach. He was one of those who knew things without having learnt anything. Reading and writing were unknown to him; he used to say:

"Of what is written in books,
I remain ignorant."

But this did not prevent his having very remarkable intuitions. Some of his poems reveal a deep knowledge of Spiritual Truths and his symbolism is expressive and transparent. He is the author of a second *Parcival* that inspired Wagner, and of which the original would be the work of Manès, that reached Wolfram of Eschenbach through the Troubadour Guyot de Provins.

It is deeply to be regretted that the greatest part of this

Catharist literature was destroyed. *The Crusade against the Grail* contains beautiful fragments of this poetry rich with hidden meaning for the intellect attentive to revealing symbolism.

SYMBOLISM AND TROUBADOURS

Symbolism was held in great esteem by the Catharists. Following the example of every religious system concealing deep knowledge and supernatural truths, the Albigenes hid some of their theories under the treble sheath of prudence, symbolism and poetry. And how they had good reason to do this!

Songs and pictures allowed them to withhold from unholy glances, the higher truths they wanted to spread abroad, but they were perilous to be left to be understood by those who were not worthy. Thus they could screen a lofty revelation from an enemy who might have taken hold of it to do harm and to destroy. And also, why not display under the shape of tales, pleasing to the imagination and to the memory, the revelations which had better been enveloped with charm and beauty? Does not thought always demand a setting in harmony with itself? And is not beauty, that gives to idea her true brilliancy, the superattraction for the souls that dimly preserved in themselves the regretful recollections of a paradise lost, spheres of Spirit, of Light and of Splendour? And the inspired Troubadours sought in poetry the words that were needed to translate the eternal themes of life in God, and to disclose the tales, the legends and the emblems that guided thought towards the Beyond.

In the enumeration which would be long, let us take some of their favourite themes. For example, in *The Golden Fleece* and *The Expedition of the Argonauts*, the words "Weavers" and "Enrobed" all circled around the same truths, the preparation of the vestment of the soul become worthy of entering the Kingdom of Heaven. Oriental Mysticism gave a name to this "radiant superior clothing of man," pointed out by the *Mundaka Upanishad*, whose brightness sometimes illuminates the Saints' physical figure. Christ had very clearly spoken of it in His parable of "The Wedding Feast" (*Matthew*, xxii. 11-14). St. Paul took up the idea to strengthen it (*II Corinth.*, v. 24). The *Book of Revelation*

(xix. 7-8) mentioned it, comparing the stuff of this robe to "fine linen, clean and white, shining and pure."¹

In their meditations so often tending towards the celestial future of which their thoughts were full, how could the Catharists not insist upon this glorious festival robe, failing which the soul was pushed into the outside darkness? And the mantle had its place in their initiations. Also, to emphasize that each must work for its' preparation, as it is said in the Scripture, and in token of that inner effort of the being building up its heavenly clothing, they themselves wove their clothes and people called them the Weavers and the Enrobed.

Mythological tales had carried about the story of the *Golden Fleece*. Catharist poets took up this expression they found excellent, and which so well indicated the shining robe of Spiritual man! The *Legend of the Argonauts* whose inuendoes completed the signification of the "*Golden Fleece*," pleased these knowing souls that understood its principal meaning. Like the Persians, like the Manicheans, the Catharists whose name signifies *pure*, laid great stress upon purity, the first condition of all perfection. The Greek word *Agos* means "whiteness." The expedition of the Argonauts was an enterprise of White Beings, of pure Beings. And everything that concerned that journey to Colchis was in harmony with that purity. Their boat painted white was called *Argos*; its builder's name was *Argos*, and the town where they embarked was the port of *Argos*. They were going to Colchis, in the South of Caucasus, not far from the *Albany*, whose root *alb*, once again means '*white*,' and of which we so often meet derivations in invaded Europe. We noted that England received the name of *Albion*, Scotland that of *Albany*. *Albi* was the name of the principal town of Romany, and the Catharists called themselves *Albigenses*! *Montauban*, *Alban* and *Albias*, are still to be found in the South of France, *Los Alberes* in Spain, *Albanie*, *Albe* and *Albano* in Italy and Central Europe. In Toulouse, where Catharists took shelter for a long time, a church is still named "Our Lady of *Dalbade*." It is supposed to have been erected on

¹ All this was explained in *The Bible and India*, p. 220, by Alex Emmanuel.

the premises of an ancient church built before the XII century, whose nave had white walls on which took place the miracle of luminous crosses of shining white. This primitive church is thought to have belonged to an order of Hospitaler-Templars, whose near relation to Albigeism is known. All this symbolism is more than clear, it is willed! If the Legend of the Argonauts ends by adventures remote from its real meaning, we must not be deceived; this is an usual scheme that serves to divert the souls not yet ready to learn the secret hidden in the heart of the tale.

THE MEANING OF THE GROTTOS

We remarked that the Catharists had chosen the grottoes of Sabarthès to retire in silence and poverty, and to celebrate their religious worship. Hermits who loved solitude dwelt in the most inaccessible of these natural retreats. When the persecutions took place, some of these caves were fortified, and they were called "Spoulgas." Battlemented walls are still seen, closing the entrance of these churches that were not built by man's hands. But it was not solely to live in meditation, or to escape from their foes through passages that are said to have hidden outlets on the hills, that the Perfect lived as Troglodytes: Another reason for this taste for underground dwelling was, once again, a symbolic idea, of which history does not speak, but which fervent mystics have revealed to us. Some years after the final disappearance of the Catharists, St. John of the Cross explained in his wise psychology of the inner life, the part of the "caves of the soul." No doubt this mystery was known by the Perfect who knew so many things and who conformed as much as possible their manner of living to everything that recalled the essential reality—the Presence of the Spirit in the human soul.

THE EMBLEMS ON THE ROCK

Emblems and signs cut into the rock, are commonly found in the venerable grottoes: *The Pentacle*, a star with five points to which the Catharists were partial because it was the picture of perfection; *The Dove*, a symbol of Spirit; *The Fish*, representing Divinity going through material world. Albigenes disliked the

catholic cross, but they had another *Cross*, double and adorned with ornaments whose mysterious meaning seems to be connected with the Trinity.

But their wide and valuable symbolism spread beyond the sculptured images in the rock.

The Fisherman had for them the same meaning that Christ gave to His words: "I will make you to become fishers of men" (*Mark*, i. 17). *The Ferryman* impersonated the mysterious boatman whose barque conveyed the elect souls across the river that separates them from the Kingdom of Heaven. *The Bridge* that none might cross without having obtained admission had the same meaning. *The Castle* on the mountain, surrounded by thick forests hard to walk through, where travellers lacking wisdom got lost, indicated the highest abode of the Spirit. This symbol might be explained as "The seven Mansions of the Soul" by St. Teresa of Avila. *The Casket on the altar* expressed the conception of a holy Thing hidden in its tangible wrapping. It has its equivalent in the Catholic Church where the Holy Sacrament is set in a shrine and deposited on the altar. Did the Catharists borrow this sign from the Roman Church? Or is it the reproduction of the Tabernacle of Israel? And did the Catholicism copy from the Hebrews their manner of pointing out the Invisible Presence of Divinity? Whatever it may be, the same great idea appears under these different aspects—the Divine Spirit enclosed in its material envelope.

THE LEGEND OF PYRENE

She gave her name to the Pyrénées! Pyrène, the daughter of King Bébryx, was love-struck for Hercules, her father's guest and forsaken by him. She wanted to join him, but was caught by a bear in the wild forest. Hearing her shrieks, Hercules came, but too late to rescue her; he found her dead and carried back her remains to King Bébryx, whilst the grottoes and mountains echoed his groans of despair.

This Legend illustrates most obviously the principles of Albigeism: Pyrène, in pursuit of Hercules, is the fire of Spirit

in the great souls of the Pure. Pyrène, expiring under the wounds of a wild beast, is the image of Spirit expiring in the inferior worlds. Hercules, carrying the King's daughter and burying her in her father's house, represents the people of the Pure men, crowning bulwark of Spirit!

And the Grotto of Lombrive enshrouds in its darkness the riddle of the Legend; in the everlasting silence of that crypt, are united the throne and the tomb of King Bébryx, the grave of Hercules and that of Pyrène. Heaps of stalagmites in the shape of tomb-stones guard the mystery of these legendary mausoleums, as the Pyrénées keep for ever, with the name of Pyrène, the idea of Fire, the symbol of the Spirit that inflamed souls in the country of Romany!

STONES

Finally there was the symbolism of stones that was of great importance in the whole of the catharist beliefs. The illumined Troubadour, Wolfram of Eschenbach, wrote:

“ Pythagorus,
Who read signs in the Heavens,
And, without contest, possessed
Science such that since Adam
No man equalled his wisdom:
He could name the richness of stones.”

The richness of stones . . . How can it be doubted in christian countries, when it is known that the Bible alludes gravely to this hidden symbology! “It was clearly demonstrated that in some passages of the books of the Prophets¹, the rock symbolized Spirit! In *Revelation* The Holy City, the Celestial Jerusalem that was not built with tangible materials “has the brilliancy of a precious stone, a stone of crystal jasper” (xxi. 11). The City where God reigns, that can only be essentially immaterial, is also “as a pure crystal.” Its twelve foundations “are adorned with precious stones” that are enumerated in that same chapter . . . and the twelve doors are twelve pearls.

¹ *The Bible and Indía*, p. 58.

Prophet Isaiah had said (*Ibid.*, xxviii. 16) "Here, In Sion I lay a stone, a tried stone, a corner-stone of price; soundly laid . . . he that uses it as a prop shall not be confused." Christ had taken up and laid stress upon this comparison; speaking of the Spirit that was in Him, He quoted the Scriptures, saying: "The stone that was rejected by the builders has become the principal one of the angle; it is the Lord's work, and a marvel in our eyes." (*Matt.*, xxi. 42) and (*Psalms*, cxviii).

When Peter, the Apostle, was still Simon the poor fisherman of Galilee, he heard Jesus saying: "Thou art Simon, but henceforth thou shalt be called Cephas, that is to say, Stone." A little later, the Master added the well-known words: "Thou art Stone, and on this Stone I will build my Church." For Christ to have thus insisted on the name of Peter, really He must have attached to it a primordial importance! Everything leads us to believe that He revealed to His disciples the symbolism of the rock that is Spirit. Later on, St. Peter took up the comparison and said (1 Peter 2) "Christ is the Living Rock, rejected by men, but chosen and precious in God's eyes." . . . and the souls and must be "Living stones shaping the Spiritual Mansion." This mystery cannot be explained without special knowledge, but it is certain that there is a primordial meaning that did not escape the Catharists, supremely clever in deciphering the hidden Truths in the depths of texts and things.

THE HOLY GRAIL

The symbolism of stones leads us to understand the meaning of the Holy Grail. Simple in appearance but imposing in its splendid reality, the Grail expresses the Inexpressible!—Infinite Life . . . Divine Spirit and its Bliss . . . Creation that is life's slackened rhythm! . . . Blessed be the symbols showing, mirror-like, what thought would be unable to express!

Let us content ourselves with saying that at first the Grail had been presented as the emerald cup that received the drops of Jesus' blood as they fell from the cross on the Calvary. Transported to our countries by Joseph of Arimathaea and Mary Magdalene, this cup, hallowed by the precious blood it had con-

tained, is supposed to have been hidden in an inaccessible castle and guarded by twelve Knights of great purity. The legend described these beings of superhuman perfection gathering around a Round Table as a symbol of their equal holiness.

But Wolfram of Eschenbach, the inspired Troubadour, thus defined the subject of this legend:

“ Profusion of wishes and Paradise:
Such was the Grail (compared to which earthly
Brightness is dull), the Stone of Light: ”

He also taught us the Biblical origin of the Grail:

“ A pagan (he was called Flegetanis)
Renowned for his deep learning,
Elected from the race of Salomon,
Born from Israel's stock,
Was the first to lead us towards the Grail. ”

There is little doubt that this revelation came down from Spain to Romany, for Wolfram of Eschenbach added:

“ In the dust of Toledo,
Guyot, a master of high renown,
Found in intermingled pagan writing,
The Legend from which all legends spring. ”

As has been indicated above, the Prophets of Israel used the words “ the Rock and the Stones ” to designate the Divine Spirit as a whole and in its different parts. Now, the legend of the Grail came from Iran where Manicheism was flourishing and where “ Gohral ” meant “ Sacred Stone. ” A slight deformation seems to have transformed “ Holy Gohral ” into “ Holy Grail. ” Consequently the Grail, *Stone of Light* . . . a lofty symbol, suggested the idea of God who is Spirit, and of the spiritual world bathing in divine light. But this Stone of Grail, this Sacred Emerald was in the shape of a cup; it had contained the blood of the Expiring Saviour whose death was the emblem of the life-giving divine sacrifice ; and the Stone of Light and the Divine Blood were, for the Catharists, representations of Spirit and Life, inseparable and of the same essence under their different aspects.

Then comparing again dispersed documents, they came to the "Primordial source of all legends," which is the "Primordial Cause of all causes." In this cup-shaped stone of Grail, their far-seeing eyes detected the unbounded universe framed by the Spirit of God materialized and enshrouded in His creation, of the same essence as Him, living from His Life and being Himself in His infinite diversity.

And lastly the Grail "Profusion of wishes and Paradise" was an artless translation, picturing the bliss of the Elect, living the life of Spirit, in God who is bliss: Spirit is infinite and its joy is infinitude!

In a wider sense, the doctrine of the Pure proclaiming the primacy of Spirit has been represented "by a heaven-fallen stone dispensing light and consolation to the world." (O. Rahn, *The Crusade against the Grail*, p. 171).

How wise of them to present under the form of mute symbols the mystery of unseen realities transcending human understanding!

THE CATHARIST WISDOM

It seems idle to say that some of these tales being related to mythology and pantheism were of heathen origin and consequently considered as worthless in Christian countries. For the meaning of most of the symbols and legends here mentioned are closely connected with the accepted truths of Christianity. The Holy Grail, for instance, is akin to the *Ark of Testimony* or Ark of the Covenant. Executed in accordance with the directions given by the Lord to Moses, this Ark was a casket of noble proportions, made of gold-plated acacia-wood, which contained the Law of God engraved on two stone tablets and a cup full of *manna*! The double sign of Spirit and Life might already be detected therein. But the manna placed into the sacred Ark bears a name greatly resembling that of *Mani*.

We cannot but admire the richness of human mind and its cleverness at hiding under various forms and legends what it could grasp of eternal truths. In this art the Catharists were

surprisingly clear-sighted. They borrowed in each and every system that which they knew to conform to the realities that last. The Perfect made their own the truths they had acknowledged, whatever their origins might have been. Following there the example of the Manicheists, the Albigenses taught the world that the informations drawn from every source, provided they be verified and controlled, contrived to form a whole whose splendour widely outshone that of the closely shut up religious systems.

Thus did the Troubadours, followers of that doctrine, draw the subjects of their poems from a wealthy mine. Messengers between the Perfect and the common people they propagated by their songs, these truths just glimpsed at, which so many souls were yearning for. Under pretence of telling their tales they mingled with everybody, going from place to place, stopping at castles where the hours seemed long to while away and recreations were welcome. They were often bidden to stay at lonely mansions. Their poems were appreciated, they delighted even those who, though unable to understand their inner meaning, were fond of the intellectual pleasure brought to them by these passing singers. But it often happened that more advanced souls felt intuitively the lofty ideas hidden behind that poetry that came to them like a heavenly rain. Then conversations would arise between the traveller and his hosts . . . and thus throve the thoughts of the Wise, spiritual food to the souls and hearts. Links were established in that way between the Perfect and the families scattered across the Provinces of Romany! It has been said, also that some Catharists would study medicine in order to mingle more closely with people. Thanks to these proceedings, the doctrine of the Albigenses spread with the least danger possible for the good Word and for its messengers, maintaining life by the renewal of ideas and teachings.

When the hostile movement burst out at the instigation of the Roman Church that was frightened at the growing success of the Albigenses, it disclosed the importance of their positions, spreading over Romany and far away like an immense spiritual empire. Up till 1160, when the council of Tours condemned that heresy, the religion of the Pure exercised its influence even on

Catholicism. Both systems were too closely related not to interpenetrate one another. Thus about 1160, Maurice of Sully, Bishop of Paris, preached a sermon of which a part has been preserved on account of its perfect style. We cannot determine whether this bishop was a Catholic or a Catharist, but the following extract testifies to an inspiration closer to Albigeism than to the Roman Church :

" There was a good monk who often prayed to God to show him something of the great sweetness He promises and gives to those who love Him; and our Lord granted him his wish. For, lo! as he sate him down one morning, all by himself in the Cloister of the Abbey, there God sent him an angel in the shape of a bird, who sat down before him ; and as he looked at this angel which he ignored was an angel, and believed to be a bird, he gazed at its beauty so deeply that he forgot all he had seen before, and up he stood to catch the bird he greatly desired. But, as he came close to it, the bird fluttered backwards a little, and the bird attracted the Good Man towards it, so that he fancied he was in a forest out of the Abbey. So he went forwards to capture it, and then the bird flew on a branch, and began singing so sweetly that no sweetness could compare with it. There was the Good Man in front of the bird, looking at the beauty of it, listening to the sweetness of its song so attentively that he forgot all earthly things."

THE END OF THE CATHARISTS

And yet those " Good Men " were exterminated! The cruel law that crushes down unmercifully the holy souls whose ideal is to bring to the world peace, light, love, hope . . . set to work against them. Should the Pure, like all the other martyrs, endure the bitterest pangs before taking the path to the stars? Does man only reach final victory, through the most horrid tortures accepted and born without faltering? Who could answer that question? We see but one side of things. We only know the Perfect had said to the world: " God is love . . . we must establish the reign of God which is a reign of Love," and men had preferred war and ruins. The Perfect had shown their priceless treasure

and wanted to share it with their brethren, but their brethren had turned upon them, destroying them and their treasure . . . and on earth, death took the place of life!

The Catharists' treasure! Invaluable treasure! In recent times, it was supposed to be found in the grottoes or the ruins of Sabarthès, as a material wealth. It was anything but perishable gold! The opulence of the Albigenses consisted of riches compared to which the earthly ones are worthless. They were inaccessible to destruction, placed so high up in the spiritual world, that they could not be taken away from those to whom they belonged! If the Catharists, just before being defeated, burnt to ashes their precious manuscripts, they certainly annihilated thus all that was palpable in their treasure. But in the Beyond, the sacred Truths subsisted whose untarnished brightness had enlightened their path up to the entrance of Eternal Life! When the legend mentions the great Esclarmonde of Foix retiring, dove-like, towards Asia, after the final ruin of Albigeism, she symbolized the Spirit lighting the world by means of the Catharist doctrine and rising to Heaven beyond the earth for ever hostile to souls that are God's beloved ones!

In reality the Pyrenean Thabor, its castles and its caves, are sheltering the remains of a momentous past. The superhuman souls of the Albigenses, incarnated the power of a wisdom accumulated during centuries in civilizations now extinct. They loved Truth and taught it to men; their Christianity was that which "has no arms against truth." In constituting their spiritual treasure, they gave to their system a granitic base; they created the Church of Love, the ideal Church that consoled the sufferings of man, uplifted human love, and glorified the Love of God!

None could shake their beliefs that they propped up by certainties. How could the Perfect disown acquired knowledge of such value? Torments, worse than death, were powerless to separate these souls from their doctrine, the source of their communion with God . . . They cherished it as the Only thing, as their holiness that was its consequence, and that they were certain of taking with them beyond the tomb . . . When the hour of the supreme trials arrived, they were seen to walk to torture without

fainting, looking proudly at death which had ceased to scare them, and which was only for them the open passage to Blessed Immortality!

They passed . . . like a surge of humanity, that rose very high to disappear suddenly in a light of apotheosis, forever withdrawn from the world of suffering! They had won the Kingdom of Spirit, so long foreseen through their symbols. Their souls had penetrated the mystery of the Holy Grail; they had secured it, having gone through "The Straight Gate," and all the obstacles that cut off the Holy City from the profane world! Like the pure Knights of the "Round Table," they had discovered the Kingdom of Heaven, during long researches, in Its lofty retreat, and they were going, like them, to take the place of the Watchers that guard the borders of the Holy Land. . .

But, with them, went the Spirit that visited humanity under their empire. The luminous symbols, hereafter empty of meaning, retired to the heights in the dim light of afar, whence they would be vainly sought after.

After the death of the White Knights, after the extermination that followed the fall of Montsegur, last rempart of the Pure, Romany became a wilderness, spiritually sunken in a death-like sleep! And a XIII century legend stated that a certain *King of Occitany* had been received, with his *people*, in a palace of *Immortality*, while his forsaken earthly country had become *deserted Romany*!

THE IDEAL OF INDIAN SAINTHOOD

CONCEPTION OF GURU FROM THE VEDIC TIMES UP TO THE MODERN

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The high conception of enthroning the saintly form of a *sadguru* (perfect Spiritual Guide) in the heart of a *sādhaka*

(aspirant after God) and its importance in spiritual realization has become traditional in the Hindu mind. In fact, there is a great deal of truth in the doctrine that truth is not realizable without a *sadguru*. This doctrine of *guru-vāda* has been very forcibly enunciated from time immemorial and laid down in the Hindu Sāstras.

A little consideration of all that we see around us is bound to fill the mind with a sense of mystery of a very high degree, which abounds in the Universe. The first search begins with the wondrous vision all around, and naturally the Vedic Seers present a cosmogony of the Universe—a cosmogony that was revealed to them in their spiritual aspiration and search. The harmony pervading the universe gives rise to the panpsychic vision. But the search soon became internal and was directed inmost, and the real basis of philosophy and mysticism was based upon that search. But the search cannot be self-directed; because the mystery of existence is so vast, that soon the aspirant feels the incentive to approach teachers who are versed in spiritual science and get light therefrom. The idea of a *guru* grew up in the mind, not only out of individual necessity, but of the demand of the collective spirit, for the spiritual insight, after all, gives the vision of the great race of the teachers, who are active in establishing a spiritual hierarchy, so that humanity can be benefited individually and collectively and may be inspired to establish the world-federation in spirit.

The entire basis of the Hindu ideas of religion rests on the theory of surrendering oneself completely to the *guru* for the purification of the mind by means of *bija-mantra*. It has the analogy of the sowing of seeds in the soil. Just as the seed is sown in the soil after it has been thoroughly cultivated and prepared and the plant grows by further culture into a big tree from the seed under the ground, so also the mind is properly cultivated and the *guru* sows the seed in it. This is perhaps the first essential for the attainment of the highest knowledge. The flesh and blood and bones encircling the inner self have got to be pierced through, and it is not possible to do it, only by the physical intelligence of man—

*Naiva vāchā na manasā prāpta śakyo na chakshushā
Astīti brūvato'nyatra katham tadupalabhyate.*

"It is sure that the Ātman is not to be known by speech, nor by mind, nor by eyes and in fact not by any one of these physical senses. So how can it be known except from one who believes in its existence?"

The question might arise as to what those teachings lead to. It will be found that those would lead the course of life automatically in a definite and distinct path without any vacillation. The life would be placed under the restraint of some disciplinary rules in the shape of rites and ceremonies, which are no mean factors in an organization. At the same time it will be felt that they are not all. It will give the life a definite shape and mould, and it will not be led by the wrong idea that the isolation of the body from the outside world and the ordinary pursuits of life is desirable.

Let us now examine, in short, the Hindu texts from the Vedic period up to the present, regarding the subject. In the *Praśna Upanishad* we find that the son of Bharadvāja and other Rishis went to Bhagavān Pippalada and questioned him about the highest knowledge to whom he replied thus:—

"Go back for a year and observe celibacy and meditation with full devotion, and then ask me questions as you like. If I know I shall tell you."

The great commentator Śaṅkarāchārya has interpreted the word "*Sraddhayā*" as *āstikya buddhyā ādaravantaḥ—samyak guru śuśrūṣhāparaḥ santaḥ*.

Again in the *Muṇḍaka Upanishad* we find:—

"One dedicated to the knowledge of Brahman after a careful examination of the results of the works done by his physical exertion attains self-lessness, realizing the fact that as there is nothing permanent in this world, there is no use pursuing after transient objects. Such a man in order to obtain that true knowledge of the divine, should approach and completely surrender himself to the *guru* who is a thorough adept in that

knowledge, with materials for worship, such as fuel for sacrificial purposes, in his hand to please him."

Śaṅkarāchārya in his commentary gives a cogent reason for the above proposition, anticipating a contrary argument that it might not be true in cases of men who are thoroughly self-educated by saying—

" Even if a man is thoroughly conversant with all the Śāstras, search after the Divine should not be attempted by himself, and it is therefore that the introduction of the *guru* in this respect, is enjoined in the authority of the text."

In later ages, from the texts of the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the above theory can also be substantiated. The Hindus strongly believe in the incarnation of God in Śrī Rāmachandra, the king of Ayodhyā and even the name of Rāma is still now held to be an infallible guide to millions of people in India. Even with such a great conception of Rāma, He has been described to be thoroughly devoted to his *guru*, Vasishṭha Deva, such a devotion being the highest duty of a man. In the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*, Rāma is seen with folded hands falling at the feet of Vasishṭha Deva, and Sītā bringing water in a golden vessel and both of them washing their feet and bathing their heads in it. Vasishṭha Deva cognizant of the incarnation of God in Rāma, smilingly said thus:—

" Even Śiva considered himself fortunate by using the water of your feet on his head, and my father Brahmā got rid of all his evils by recognizing your feet to be his pilgrimage. What you are saying now is *only* to teach people as to how one should behave with one's *guru*. I know full well that you have accepted this incarnation with Lakshmi."

Also in the *Mahābhārata*, we find that Śrī Kṛishṇa, who also like Rāmachandra is God incarnate, and whose perfection of life in all directions surpasses human understanding, himself passed through the ceremony of initiation by his *guru*, Sandīpani Ṛishi in order to teach the doctrine to others.

In *Śrīmad Bhāgavatā Purāṇa* we find the climax reached and the *guru* has been made identical with Brahman:—

*Sarve priyatamaśchātmā yato na bhayamanvapi
Iti veda sarve vidvān yo vidvān sa gururhariḥ.*

“ There is not the least fear in practising devotion to God, because, He is the dearest of all ; one who knows this is wise and the wise one is *Guru* and *Guru* is God.”

*Tasmāt gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttāmam
Śabde pare cha nishṇātam brahmanyupa samāśrayam
Tañcha bhāgavatān dharmān śikṣhed gurvātmadaivataḥ
Amāyayā anuvṛittyā yaistushyedātmāmado Hariḥ!*

In the Tāntric ages this idea was advanced to a very great extent and in fact, the teachings of the Upanishads, the *Mahā-bhārata*, the Purāṇas and the Saṁhitās were all concentrated only to the worship of the *guru*, advocated very strongly in practical life in *mantras* and sayings of the Ṛishis, and the last and finishing stroke was given by the text

na guroradhikam tattvam na guroradhikam tapaḥ.

Later on, there was a rude shock to the Hindu spiritual culture by the Mohammedan conquest, and gradually a dark age ensued, resulting in a thorough degradation of the moral, physical and spiritual culture of the Hindus and in the chaos that followed, sprang up Śrī Gaurāṅga at Navadvīp in Bengal. Divinity in him was apparent to any one who came in touch with him, and also to others who heard about him. He, in course of his short period of incarnation about four hundred years ago, brought back to the Hindu mind, the lost memory of the high ideals of the Hindu religion and preached throughout the length and breadth of India the efficacy of uttering the name of Śrī Kṛishṇa and Śrī Rāma as also the doctrine of *guru*-cult so effectively followed in former ages. Simultaneously with him Guru Nānak, the great Sikh leader, preached the same ideal in the Punjab and Northern India. These two forces were strong enough to revive the old ideal for some centuries but again lost their hold by several counter-influences from other parts of the world.

India gradually fell within the clutches of the Western culture by the English conquest and again a confusion followed, and the old ideals were threatened to be swept away, by the new streams

of thoughts imported from other countries, till the advent of Raja Rammohun Roy in Bengal, who succeeded in reviving the old ideals of the Upanishads to a great extent, and he was followed by Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, the father of the poet Rabindranath, who by his individual effort established the Brahma Samaj. All the educated Bengalis, having a hankering after spiritual culture, flocked round it in numbers, and found best food for the satisfaction of their religious hunger.

About the end of the last century, Brahmananda Keshabchandra Sen gave a distinct and definite shape to it by his unique, unrivalled and silver eloquence both in India and abroad, and succeeded in earning a world-wide fame by partially laying open the hidden treasures of India to the outside world. While Keshabchandra was actively occupying the mind of Bengal, Sri Ramakrishna the great saint of Dakshineswar brought out the Hindu ideals in its entirety and he was thronged with all seekers after truth, including Keshabchandra and Bejoy Krishna Goswami.

Swami Vivekananda, the great thinker and religious preacher whose fame is now spread throughout the world by his valuable messages through his missionary works sat at the feet of Ramakrishna and accepted him as his *guru*.

We cannot conclude this paper without making reference to Bejoy Krishna Goswami; the evolution of whose spiritual life up to the end of the last century is interesting to follow. A descendant of Advaitāchārya of Santipur, he was born under the Vaishṇavic influences, but in his youth he was struck by the ideals of the Brahma Samaj as established by Maharshi Debendranath and Keshabchandra, and joined it as a co-worker of Keshabchandra. He could, however, no longer get satisfaction of his strong desires for the attainment of that truth, which gives an unfailing and perpetual bliss of mind. He went, out of his fold in search for the truth, under pain of death, in the Himalayas and moved about quite alone suffering through severe austerities and at last found out the truth through the grace of his *guru* Brahmananda Paramahansa of Maṇasarovar (Tibet). He attained perfect bliss, and all his doubts were at once removed. He came back to Bengal and began to preach the doctrines which were

mysteriously revealed to him, and in course of a very few years turned the tide of the religious life of Bengal by a practical exhibition in himself, of the light that he received. He had a hunger for this light, and it came to him when he was in touch with his *guru* and his soul blossomed into realization, by the seeds sown by the *guru*. The central basis of his spiritual life, derived from practical experience, was that truth cannot be fully achieved by one's own single-handed efforts, except through the grace of *guru*. This he preached not by any missionary work, but by his own example to his numerous disciples and it is therefore that he hid within himself the truth of the future. He was bold enough to put forth his views in recognition of the eternal truth in the ancient tradition of *guru-vāda* in these days of pugnacious individuality. He was absolutely non-sectarian and men of all castes and creeds were received by him without any distinction. The substance of all his teachings was to remember mentally (without uttering a single syllable) a potential name of Almighty and all-pervading God in the shape of a *mantra* delivered by him with the inhalation and exhalation of breath, so that any one accustomed to this form of worship would be mentally praying to God every moment up to the last breath of his life. The name of the Lord to him represented the thing for which the name stands in whatever shape or form that may appear out of the thoughts for the thing itself. He was full of Universal love and his catholicity of views made him respectful to all who had devotion to God, in any way they liked. His philosophy, if any, was the *Achintya Bhedābheda* (i.e. inconceivable difference in identity and identity in difference) as adumbrated by Śrī Gaurāṅga.

Kuladananda Brahmachari was an ardent disciple of Bejoy Krishna, and while a mere school boy, he was attracted by his teachings, and was in constant company with him for full thirteen years. Once when he was very much dejected, the position of *guru* in the life of a disciple was explained to him very beautifully thus by Bejoy Krishna—"You are now nothing but a foetus in the womb. What have you got to think for your self? Just as the mother can feel the condition of the womb and can perceive

when it moves, likewise, the *guru* is always cognizant of all the conditions and workings of the disciple so long as the child does not come out of the womb it has absolutely no independent power of its own. Every particle of what the mother takes as her meal permeates through the blood channels to the foetus and it is nourished only by that. So whatever is acquired by the *guru*, the disciple gets only his necessary share. The disciple improves with the improvement of the *guru*. After the birth, it is the mother that feeds the child and nourishes it by providing all necessary things. The *guru* would never leave the disciple, even after the attainment of his perfection."

Kuladananda was trained in the life of *brahmacharya* by Bejoy Krishna. His permanent contribution to Bengali literature consists in the publication of his diary in five volumes styled *Sri Sri Sadguru Saṅga*. It embodies his noted experiences and realizations as well as the precious teachings of Bejoy Krishna. He notes thus regarding his experience—"Since the first day I began to practise *brahmacharya*, I was a changed man, and both my body and mind were transformed into a new shape. I could see through my body as if in a glass, and feel that it had become much lighter and Vedic *mantras* of *brahmacharya* had come automatically to my remembrance, with the feeling that I am a true Brahmin and Rishi. The *mantras* are all alive and full of force and I felt the body absolutely pure." This is the practical experience of one whose life was dedicated to his *guru*. He nailed the flag of his *guru* to his mast before everything else and preached up to the last the spiritual value of surrendering to the *guru*.

Bejoy Krishna so steadfastly held to his truth and he had to pass through so many tests and ordeals that he had finally to suffer expulsion from home for his refusal to follow a false and hollow life of hereditary profession. The gradual evolution in his life showed how potent a force he was in Indian spirituality. He lived as a light-house to thousands of travellers in their groping pilgrimage for truth. He never preached what he did not practise in his own life. And this is the distinct feature of the Indian Saints. He remained immersed in his own self, in deep meditation,

and the reflection of his life created a soothing atmosphere all around.

Reverence of personality in the sainthood is thus the essence of Eastern culture. As the poet Rabindranath said, " We in India do believe in personality. In the West you have admiration for power. And wherever our heart is touched with something that is perfect in human nature in its completeness, in the spiritual aspect of it, it goes deep and we bow our heads before it. We have a feeling of reverence for the Divine in man and we revere it."

BRAHMACHARYA IN ANCIENT INDIA

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The practice of *brahmacharya* involving a rigid discipline of both mind and body is as old as the Vedas. It is mentioned in the *Rig-Veda*, and a *brahmachārin*, or one practising *brahmacharya*, is called ' a member of the gods' body ' (X. 109.5). In the *Atharva-Veda* one whole hymn is devoted to the glorification of *brahmacharya*. " The *brahmachārin* moves inciting both hemispheres of the world; in him the gods are harmonized. He holds the heavens and the earth; he fills the teacher with creative fervour." " Through *brahmacharya*, through creative fervour, the gods drove away death. Indra, forsooth, brought the light to the gods by his *brahmacharya*." In the same hymn we find the *brahmachārin*, as invested with the sacred girdle, wearing skin of the black antelope, collecting firewood, and begging alms for food. The youth is initiated by the teacher into a new life (*upa-nī*), and the custom survives to the present day in the *upanayana* ceremony for the twice-born boys. The *Chhândogya Upanishad* (II. 23.1) states that " *Dharma* rests upon three supports—first, sacrifice, study, and giving alms; second, penance; third, observance of rigid *brahmacharya*, living in the house of

the teacher. All of them lead men to the region of the holies ; but he who is established in Brahman attains deathlessness."

' *Brahmacharya* ' is a word which is peculiarly Indian in character and is very difficult to translate into English or any other European language. It is due to the fact that it conveys three or more different meanings and is sometimes used to denote a compound of ideas drawn from all the different meanings. Literally ' *brahmachārin* ' means one who devotes himself to Brahman. Now what is Brahman? The lexicographer Amara gives five different meanings to 'Brahman,' viz. (1) Veda, (2) the Essence, (3) Penance, (4) a Brahmin and (5) the god Prajāpati, and explains the word ' *brahmachārin* ' as one studying the Vedas, or one making penance, or one living in the first of the four stages of life.

An interesting story is related in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (III. 10.11) regarding the value of *brahmacharya* or study of the Vedas. The sage Bharadvāja having passed three-fourths of the span of human life in *brahmacharya* became old and decrepit. The god Indra coming to him said, " Bharadvāja, if I give you the fourth quarter of life, what will you do with it?" He replied, " It will also be passed in *brahmacharya*." Indra then showed him three large mountains which were not seen before. He took three handfuls out of them, and said to Bharadvāja, " These mountains are the Vedas. Limitless are the Vedas. Of these you have done only these three handfuls in the three quarters of your life, the rest you have not yet studied. Come now, learn the Sāvitrī and Sāvitrī is all knowledge." In this passage the word *brahmacharya* means only the study of the Vedas and nothing else.

The *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* (I. 1.16) says, " Brahman verily created Brahmā on a lotus leaf. Of a truth he, Brahmā, thus created, thought, ' By what single syllable can I perceive all desirable objects, all regions, all gods, all Vedas, all sacrifices, all words, all function, all creation, whether movable or ' immovable.' He performed *brahmacharya* and he beheld the syllable *Om*." Here *brahmacharya* means penance and not the study of the Vedas. The *Mahābhārata* (XII. 161.2) also states that the

whole creation was done by Prajāpati by means of penance (*tapas*). It is from a combination of these two meanings that a third meaning of *brahmacharya* developed. We hear frequently of *varṇāśrama* system. Mankind is divided into four *varṇas* or orders, viz. *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaiśya*, *Sudra*, and the life of the first three orders is divided into four stages or *āśramas*, viz. *brahmacharya*, *gārhaṣṭhya*, *vānaprastha*, *bhāikshya*. Here *brahmacharya* means the austere life of a student in the house of his teacher where the whole attention is devoted to the study of the Veda in an atmosphere of rigid discipline almost amounting to penance. Elaborate rules were laid down to guide the life of a student *brahmachārīn* in respect of his food, clothing, and general habits.

The beginnings of the *āśrama* theory are met with as early as the period of the *Ṛig-Veda*, and the fullest development is reached in the time of the Upanishads. The *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* (ch. 2) prescribes a period of twenty-four, or at least twelve, years for the *brahmacharya* of a Vedic student, and urges him to conquer pride, the love of fame, sleep, anger, bragging, the thought of personal beauty, and love of scents, which remain deposited for the period in question with the antelope, the teacher, the boa, the boar, the water, the maiden, and the plants respectively. The *Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa-Upanishad* states, "This is indeed the remedy for the elemental self: Acquisition of the knowledge of the Vedas, performance of one's own duty, therefore conformity on the part of each man to the *āśrama* to which he happens to belong. This is indeed the rule for one's own duty, other performances are like the mere branches of a stem. And if people say that a man does not belong to any of the *āśramas*, and that he is an ascetic, this is wrong" (IV. 3). The *Taittirīya Upanishad* contains a fine picture of the relation between the teacher and the pupil during the period of *brahmacharya* (I. 3), and also detailed instructions of the teacher to the pupil when the latter is going back to his home. "Say what is true; do thy duty; do not neglect the study of the Vedas. After having brought to thy teacher his proper fee, do not cut off the line of children. . . . Do not swerve from the truth. . . . Do not neglect the sacrificial works due to the gods

and *manes*. Let thy mother be to thee like unto a god, also thy father, thy teacher, and thy guest. Whatever actions are blameless, not others, shouldst thou perform. . . . Whatever thou givest, give with faith, with graciousness, with modesty, with respect, with kindness" (I. 11). *Brahmacharya* had prepared the young man to lead such a life of virtue in the world, and it was compulsory especially for the Brahmins. The *Chhândogya Upanishad* (VI. 1. 1-2) states that Āruṇi asked his son Śvetaketu to take to *brahmacharya*, because no one of his family had ever neglected the study of the Vedas. Accordingly Śvetaketu went to the house of the teacher at the age of twelve and studied all the Vedas there till the age of twenty-four.

A slightly different meaning of the word '*brahmacharya*' is found in the *Bṛihadâraṇyaka Upanishad* (VI. 2.4), where it denotes not the first of the four *āśramas* in life, but the state of being a pupil only for a period. Gautama on learning from his son Śvetaketu that he had been asked some questions by king Pravāhaṇa Jaiṇali which neither the father nor the son could answer, determined to go to the king and live as his pupil for some time. Though an old man at the time, such was his hankering for knowledge that he became initiated as a pupil to a Kshatriya. In this case '*brahmacharya*' denotes not the study of the Vedas only, nor the making of a penance, nor the life of a student youth in the first *āśrama*, but the course of instruction in an unknown science from an expert.

There were people in society who thought that everything, including the knowledge of the Veda, could be acquired by means of penance, and that, therefore, spending long years to learn bit by bit from the teacher was not necessary. Manu mentions two kinds of *snātaka* (one who has taken the ceremonial bath on the completion of his period of studentship)—viz. *vidyāsnātaka* who has completed his studies at the house of the teacher, and *vratasnātaka* who has completed his course of instruction in various religious practices (IV. 31). Of these two the *vidyāsnātaka* is the more honourable, and the residence of a student in the house of his teacher for studying is regarded as essential for the acquirement of Vedic knowledge without which a Brahmin is not worth

the name. The story of Raibhya and Bharadvāja in the *Mahābhārata* (III. 125-138) describes how Raibhya and his sons who were regular scholars were held in greater esteem by the people than Bharadvāja and his son Yavakṛita who were devoted to penance only, and how the jealous Yavakṛita brought ruin upon himself and his father by his effort to acquire Vedic knowledge by penance only. The god Indra calls it *amārga*, i.e. wrong way, and likens it to the mad determination of an old, feeble man to construct a causeway across the rushing Ganges by throwing handfuls of sand in the water. When Yavakṛita was finally puzzled because of the uselessness of the Vedic knowledge which he had acquired by his penance, the gods pointed out that the knowledge of Raibhya was much better because it had been gained by immense pains and devoted service to the teacher! The short-cut method of passing examinations and acquiring knowledge is as fruitless today as it was in the past.

A fifth meaning is attached to the word 'brahmacharya' as it occurs in Patañjali's *Yoga-Sūtra* (II. 30),¹ where the commentator explains it as *upastha-saṁnyama* or control of the sexual organ. The *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* states, "To think of the opposite sex, to converse about their charms, to sport with them, to gaze covetously at them, to talk with them secretly, determination to win them, to take action for the purpose, and cohabitation—these eight are called *maithuna* by the wise men, and the converse is *brahmacharya*, which should be pursued for the increase of piety." It is in this sense that the word is more frequently used nowadays, but it is a secondary meaning, sexual desire being an obstacle in the path of a student as well as of an ascetic.

As the control of sexual desire is difficult without proper discipline of both body and mind, the rules prescribed for a student *brahmachārīn* as regards his food, clothing, etc., are imposed also on those who are expected to remain in a state of purity and continence. Such *brahmacharya* is to be practised by a Hindu widow for life. Thus Manu says, "On the death of the husband the chaste wife should remain established in the rules of *brahmacharya*. Such a woman, even though childless, goes to

¹ Cf. *Yājñavalkya Smṛiti*, III.312.

heaven as do the *brahmachārins*." The *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* contains detailed instructions to regulate the life of a widow. Thus she is not to lie on a couch or to use a carriage; she is to avoid the use of scents, hair oil, fine cloth, garlands, sandal-wood paste, conch shell ornament, red vermillion, sweets, betel-leaf, mirror, the dressing of hair, and the rubbing of the body with oil. She should take one vegetarian meal only at the end of the day, and observe fast on the Ekādaśī day and also on days like Janmāshṭamī and Śivarātri. She ought not to see the face of a man other than a relative, and be present at a dance, musical entertainment, and feast.

Such *brahmacharya* for a short period is required to make a man pure and fit on such occasions as the offering of oblations to the manes, etc.¹

Rules were carefully drawn up for the guidance of a student *brahmachārīn's* life. The *Āpastamba Dharma-sūtra* (I. 1) states that "the initiation is the consecration in accordance with the texts of the Veda, of a male who is desirous of knowledge. . . . He from whom the pupil gathers true knowledge is called the *āchārya*. Him he should never offend. For he causes the pupil to be born a second time, and this second birth is better than the first birth. The father and the mother produce the body only. Let a *Brāhmaṇa* be initiated in spring, a *Kshatriya* in summer, a *Vaiśya* in autumn; a *Brāhmaṇa* in the eighth year from his conception, a *Kshatriya* in the eleventh year, and a *Vaiśya* in the twelfth. . . . He who has been initiated shall dwell as a student in the house of his teacher for forty-eight years, or for thirty-six years, or for twenty-four years. Twelve years must be the shortest time for his residence with his teacher.

"He shall obey his teacher. He shall do what is serviceable to his teacher, he shall not contradict him. He shall always occupy a seat lower than that of his teacher. He shall not eat food offered at a funeral oblation or at a sacrifice, nor pungent condiments, salt, honey, or meat. He shall not sleep in the day-

¹ *Manu*, III.188-192; see *Pārashara Grihya Sūtra*, I.8.21; *Asvalāyana Grihya Sūtra*, I.8.10-12.

time. He shall not use perfumes. He shall preserve chastity. He shall not embellish himself by using ointments and the like. He shall not wash his body with hot water for pleasure. Let him not sport in the water whilst bathing. . . . Let him wear a skin only as his upper garment. Let him not look at dancing. Let him not go to gambling assemblies, nor to festive crowds. Let him not be addicted to gossiping. Let him be discreet. Let him not talk with women except for what is absolutely necessary. Let him be forgiving, untiring in fulfilling his duties, modest, possessed of self-command, energetic, free from anger, and free from envy.

“ He shall go begging with a vessel in the morning and in the evening. Having taken alms he shall place them before his teacher and offer them to him. He may eat food after having been ordered to do so by his teacher. He shall not beg for his own sake alone. After he has eaten, he shall himself clean his dish. . . . In the evening and in the morning he shall fetch water in a vessel for the use of his teacher. Daily he shall fetch fuel from the forest and place it on the floor. After having kindled the fire, and having swept the ground around the altar, he shall place the sacred fuel on the fire every morning and evening.

“ He shall be very attentive the whole day long, never allowing his mind to wander from the lesson during the time devoted to studying. And at other times he shall be attentive to the business of his teacher. And during the time for rest he shall give his mind to doubtful passages of the lesson learnt. . . . Every day he shall put his teacher to bed after having washed his feet and after having rubbed them. He shall retire to rest after having received the teacher's permission. . . . He shall approach his teacher with the same reverence as a deity, without telling idle stories, attentive and listening eagerly to his words.

“ He shall not pluck flowers or leaves in order to smell at them. He shall avoid the use of shoes, umbrellas, chariots, and the like luxuries. He shall not smile. If he smiles, he shall smile covering the mouth with his hand. He shall not bring his face near a woman in order to inhale the fragrance of her body; nor shall he desire a woman in his heart; nor shall he touch a

woman without a particular reason. . . . After having studied as many branches of learning as he can, he shall procure in a righteous manner the fee to be given to his teacher, according to his power. . . . Even after return home from the teacher's house the behaviour towards his teacher, as prescribed by those who know the law, must be observed by the pupil to the end."

According to the *Gautama Dharma-śāstra* (II. 13-50), "the pupil shall avoid honey, meat, perfumes, garlands, sleep in the daytime, ointments, collyrium, carriage, shoes, umbrella, love, anger, covetousness, garrulity, bathing for pleasure, playing musical instruments, cleaning the teeth, elation, dancing, singing, calumny, and fear. In the presence of his teacher he should not cover his throat, lean, stretch out his feet, spit, laugh, yawn, and crack finger-joints. To gaze at and touch women; gambling; taking things not offered; injuring animate beings; pronouncing the name of the teacher; making bitter speeches; and drinking spirituous liquor—these are forbidden. He shall occupy a seat lower than that of his teacher, shall get up from bed before him and retire to rest after him. . . . The teacher is chief among all *gurus*."

The *Yājñavalkya Samhitā* (ch. I) likewise urges the pupil to "abstain from honey, meat, ointments, substances turned sour, the company of women, injury to animals, vulgar words, and slandering," and remarks that "the twice-born *brahmachārin*, who studies daily, enjoys the fruit of bestowing the earth full of treasure and of the highest austerities."

"If a student ~~eats~~ meat, even though given by his teacher as leavings, he shall perform a *Krichchhra* penance of twelve days' duration and afterwards finish his vow" (*Vasishṭha Dharma-śāstra* XXIII. 11).

As the principal occupations of a good Brahmin were studying and teaching with occasional work at sacrifices, the life of a *brahmachārin* came to be regarded as an ideal even for ex-student householders. Besides, the influence of *brahmacharya* extending over a period of from twelve to forty-eight years could not but mould the character in a certain fashion, as the modern public school training, though for a much shorter period, does in England.

The rules guiding the life of a Brahmin householder show that there is not to be a sharp deviation from the manners and practices of a *brahmachārin*. A good Brahmin after marrying and becoming a householder should earn his livelihood by work which does not involve any injury to living beings. He should not try to earn more than what is absolutely necessary for living, and must on no account accept service. A Brahmin should maintain himself and his family by teaching, acting as priest at sacrifices, and accepting gifts, but, if possible, by teaching only. He must not do anything which may excite the passions, and which are against the precepts of the Sāstras. Every day he should study the Vedas, and other religious books, and offer sacrifices to gods and manes. His doors must remain always open to guests who should be fed and treated as gods, and he should never be sparing in his charities to deserving persons. These constitute the *Pañcha-yajña* the daily performance of which is necessary to cleanse a person of the sins which are incurred consciously and unconsciously in the act of living. A *snātaka* householder should have his hair, nails and beard attended to by a barber, wear white cloth, remain clean both externally and internally, patient and enduring, devoted to the study of the Veda, and temperate in habits. He should always be respectful to his teacher, father, mother, a Brahmin, cow and ascetic. He must not seek to punish anybody except his son and pupil. While observing the rites and vows of the Dharmaśāstras (*niyama*), he should at the same time cultivate the virtues known as *yama*, such as control of the sexual desire, philanthropy, forgiveness, speaking the truth, purity of mind, non-injury to animals, abstaining from stealing, and sweet temper. He should not eat meat except at sacrifices. (Manu, IV ; *Vyāsasamhitā*, III).

Such was the emphasis put upon the practice of *brahmacharya* and the unreality of the world and all worldly things in the Upanishads and later religious books that many of the student *brahmachārins* were reluctant to give up their *brahmacharya* and live a married life with wife and children. Who would then offer sacrifices to the gods and manes, which constitute the fundamental basis of the Vedic religion? The pendulum, therefore, had to be

pushed backward a little, and the virtues of the life of a householder began to be stressed. Thus the *Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upanishad* declares that though "no one who is an ascetic brings his sacrificial works to perfection or obtains knowledge of the Highest Self," one must have passed through the different *āśramas* before one can become an ascetic (IV. 3). Manu warns that if a Brahmin becomes a *sannyāsin* or ascetic for attaining salvation without having studied the Vedas, produced sons, and performed sacrifices, he goes to hell (VI. 37), and remarks that of the four *āśramas* the life of the householder is the best (VI. 89). Lest anyone should argue that if *brahmacharya* was the noblest thing in creation without which true knowledge and salvation were unattainable and that, therefore, procreation of children should not be thought of, the law-givers were at pains to declare that the sexual intercourse between husband and wife at prescribed periods was not breach of *brahmacharya*, nay, the non-observance of marital duties was a sin leading to hell.

In spite of such injunctions there were some student *brahmachārins* who could not be induced to become householders, and their action evoked different opinions from different law-givers. Gautama, though declaring that the life of the householder is the source of the other *āśramas*, says that "according to some law-givers, a student *brahmachārīn* after finishing his study of the Vedas may make his choice as to which of the orders he will enter next." (III. 1-3). This opinion is shared by Vasishṭha (VII. 3-4). Vyāsa, too, declares that nothing is more meritorious than the *gārhaṣṭhya āśrama* (IV. 2), yet acknowledges that he who observes *brahmacharya* from the day of initiation till death is a *naishṭhika brahmachārīn* who attains union with Brahman, while he who observes it for a limited period as thirty-six years, is called an *upakurbānaka* (I. 40). The *Vishṇusmṛiti* also makes provision for *naishṭhika brahmacharya* (XXVIII. 46) and so also *Dakṣa-saṁhitā* (I. 8). The *Mahābhārata* states, "At the end of *brahmacharya* a *Brāhmaṇa* should in obedience to the order of his teacher take to one of the four *āśramas*. . . The *gārhaṣṭhya* is said to be the source of all merits" (XII. 233. 4-6). "One desirous of salvation acquires the right to enter the *bhaikshya āśrama* by

having performed the duties of a *brahmachārin* " (XII. 61. 7). The well-known story of Jaratkāru (I. 13), on the other hand, gives a warning that a life-long *brahmachārin* does wrong both to himself and his fathers who are doomed to eternal sufferings because of the extinction of the family. The dispute between the respective claims of *gārhaṣṭhya* and *sannyāsa* was not, and could not, be finally settled.

I cannot conclude this subject without referring to the dialogue between Yudhisṭhira and Bhishma in which the former asked if there was any common root and essence of the different religious doctrines and practices of the world. Bhishma replied that everybody, irrespective of creed and denomination, should try to acquire *dama*, i.e. control of the senses, because *dama* is the highest virtue among men of all religions. A person possessed of *dama* is known by the following qualities—forgiveness, patience, non-injuring spirit, equal treatment to all, love of truth, sincerity, self-control, industry, sweetness, modesty, want of restlessness, generosity, want of anger, cheerfulness, want of jealousy, respectfulness to parents and teacher, and tenderness for all creatures (*Mahābhārata*, XII. 160). India, the land of *brahmacharya*, commends these words of the great celibate hero Bhishma to this Parliament of Religions at the centenary of the great *brahmachārin* Sri Ramakrishna.

THOMAS PAINE AND THE RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY

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The Sri Ramakrishna Centenary synchronizes with the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of the great Anerucab lover of truth and liberty, Thomas Paine (born January 29, 1737). While Paine is commonly considered an American, he was really a citizen of the world. Born in England, he played an important role in both American and French Revolutions. His *Rights of*

Man, published in London in 1791-2, was such a sensational success that it alarmed the British Government, which shortly outlawed the author and suppressed the book. While his earlier writings were on behalf of political liberty and equality and against the tyrannies and indiscriminations of the established political system, his *Age of Reason* was intended to clarify thought and strip off the pretences and superstitions of traditional religious belief. Curiously enough this book, so vehemently denounced in both France and America as a dastardly atheistic attack on all that was holy, was actually written in the midst of the French Revolution partly while its author was imprisoned in the Bastille, for the purpose of stemming the tide of vengeful hatred and utter unrighteousness which the revolutionaries had let loose. There can be little doubt that no book of modern times has been more widely read than the *Age of Reason*. It has been a potent factor in the revolution of religious thought. So far have the conceptions of the average man with respect to the Bible as a book of revelation been altered since Paine's day that his vigorous attack on the encrusted dogmas of the eighteenth century appears now, in many respects, as quaint and antiquated. Nevertheless, the great ideal of Paine set forth in his expressive declaration, "The world is my country, to do good is my religion," still largely represents the goal of much of the finest idealism of our own age.

Thomas Paine was thus one of the prophets of a true humanism. In our Western world at least (I pretend to no knowledge of the Eastern) the bedlam of contentious creeds has well-nigh disappeared. Less and less importance attaches to dogma and ceremony, and the basic realities of individual, and especially of social, life become more and more the concern of ethical leaders. Today we see that a just, humane and decent social medium is a prime essential for the rearing of just, humane and decent human beings.

But as one views the modern world scene, one realizes that the goal is still far away. One wonders sometimes whether we are advancing or receding. We seem to be caught in a hopeless dilemma: we can't have a better world until we rear a finer generation of men and women; and we can't rear that generation

until we get the better world in which alone they may develop. But man dare not lose faith in the ultimate achievement of the ideals of Paine, for man does not lose faith in himself. If he does that, he will surely sink back towards bestiality. Surely one of the strongest safeguards against such a final defeat and disaster is the world-wide participation of men of tolerance, and goodwill in a congress designed to pool the wisdom and strengthen the purpose of aspiring humanity.

THE BHĀGAVATAS

A SEMASIOLOGICAL STUDY

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A green belt (Sanskrit *dvīpa*) with a genial climate girded the North Pole (*Meru*) in the Inter-glacial Age. Treasures (*vasu*, wealth, riches) of force and fecundity were scattered by the Aurora Borealis; the celestial luminary (*dcva*, the shining one) energized (*vish*, to energize) the followers of Vishṇu-Vāsudeva after their long hibernation. Then came the last Ice Age with a cataclysmic reversal of atmospheric conditions; the Arctic nest snowed up and became unfit for human tenement. In rude dug-outs the heroic Vaishṇavas dared raging polar seas and after perilous adventures, stretching over unrecorded centuries, finally reached the Indian Midlands (*madhyadeśa*, midland). The Vaishṇava nobles to whom their feudal lords allotted (*bhāj*, to divide) large portions (*bhāga*, a portion) of land in the subjugated Midlands did homage and military service to the Bhāgavata, their leige-lord and land-donor. The Bhāgavata, a title given to Vishṇu-śishya, was exalted from an allotter of light and land to a disposer of fate and dispenser of destiny. A concept even more abstract is 'dispensation of Providence.' The Bhāgavatas, the ancient mariners from Meru's heights had long ceased to be rovers and raiders; they were settled on forms, and ploughed (*kṛish*, to plough) the land. Bhagavad-Vāsudeva was hymned

as Kṛishna, father and fount of the arable soil. A legend arose that prince Vasudeva, a staunch and loyal client of the Bhāgavata had from Śakti Devakī a Kshatriya son; Kṛishna-Vāsudeva, Devakī-putra, prince of the Outland, founded the Bhāgavata sect which rapidly conquered the midlands.

All we have, and all we are, is a free gift of the Giver, a *bhāga* of the Bhāgavata ; in inter-glacial language, the two words denote the northern light or Sun-god. Slavs are fatalists, and believe in an inscrutable, immutable destiny (*bhāga*); the Russian word for God is still *Bog*. Soviet Russia, with her anti-imperialistic policy of international fraternization (the sinister counterpart is world revolution) is writing the last chapter in the chequered Indo-European Chronicle.

Bhakti or love and devotion to the All-Giver originated among warrior-theists (*dvaitins*) rather than priestly monists (*advaitins*). The Bhāgavatas or the *bhakti*-nobility, love the Ever-Beautiful, manifest in transient beauty, and personified in the adorable Bhagavat-Kṛishṇa. *Bhakti-yoga* means self-realization through love. *Bhakti*-theism is dualistic (*dvaita*), whereas midland scholasticism raised Vedic polytheism to *advaita*—"Ekaṁ Sad viprā bahudhā vadanti!"

The Mahāyānists are Bhāgavatas ; they attacked the midland pantheon, and elaborated *Bhakti-yoga*. *Sāṃkhya-yoga* fortified these sturdy warrior-monotheists of old. In the fifth century B.C., Kṛishṇa-Vāsudeva was identified with Bhagavad-Vishṇu, the Sun-god. The midland hierarchy declared Bhagavad to be Brahman, the cream and essence or reality of the fugitive creation; Kṛishṇa and Rāma, the two favourite heroes of the Bhāgavata-Kshatriyas, were canonized as divine incarnations of Bhagavad-Brahman. Both heroes were glorified, beatified, in the revised version of the two epics. In honor of Kṛishṇa, the *Bhagavad-Gītā* or "Song of Destiny" and the *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* were composed. The *Gītā* was first drafted in the second century B.C. and it came out in its present shape in the second century A.D. The song is a happy blend of psycho-analysis and sacrificial love, *sāṃkhya* and *bhakti*. "Devotion to Buddha" had grown stagnant and conventional; in the Mahāyāna schools the

Bhagavad-Gītā stimulated and revived *bhakti* for Buddha. The Brahmins, being scared by the wide spread of Buddhism, adopted *Bhakti-yoga*, and labelled the Buddhist philosophy of love as orthodox. *Sāṃkhya-yoga*, the bedrock of Buddhism, had originated in the tree-thinking atmosphere of the Outland where prince Kṛishṇa and his aristocratic household were leaders of the *bhakti* school. The first *bhaktas* were *rajarshis* or soldier-saints. King Janaka, one of these royal sages was averse to the plurality of Vedic Gods, and taught the proud Brahmins 'loyalty to the Lord' (*Iśvara-bhakti*) and self-realization (*ātma-buddhi*). The Vaishṇava vision of Svetadvīpa, the lost paradise, emerged as the Bhāgavata religion, and won Madhyadeśa where the Sun-god Viṣṇu lost his physical identity, and merged in Bhagavata. Viṣṇuism, based on *Bhakti-yoga*, grips 150 million Hindus west of Benares.

Love intoxicates until the Lover and the Beloved are one. Śrī Kṛishṇa is the central sun round whom all other cherished *bhakti*-ideals pivot. His image, thrown on the mundane film, expresses infinitude imprinted on transient grandeur. Love is selfless, and casts out fear. Great lovers (*parā-bhaktas*) are dauntless cavaliers, and safe from evil. They must love the entire world. But their earthly yearnings are uplifted, as they contemplate Reality (Brahman) amidst the Vanity fair. Once *bhakti* is perfect (*parā*), *jñāna* goes along with it; Love and Wisdom meet and merge. "When I see my Beloved, I forget myself and everything in my soul-trance; I see only Infinite Unity, unconditioned by sound or shape, undifferentiated by *nāma-rūpa*." As soon as Prahlaḍa realized his individuality, the universe stood before him and with it its celestial Builder with countless and glorious qualities. But in the *parā-bhakti* ecstasy, Prahlaḍa lost all consciousness of the cosmos and its architect. As long as the blessed Gopis lost sense of their personality, they were all Kṛishṇa their Beloved. But on remembering the one adorable Bhagavat they were Gopis again, and immediately appeared before them the Divine Shepherd-Boy, yellow-robed and fragrant-wreathed, with a smile on His lotus face like the radiant archer-God.

Sanskrit Semasiology, the evolution of culture by linguistic aid and evidence, is still a desideratum in Indian Colleges. A

tentative beginning has been made by the writer of these lines in *Indo-Iranian Philology* (published, Bombay, 1929). *Veda and Vedānta*, again approached on "biological" lines, will come out in Almora 1937.¹ Semasiology, the romance and life-side of words, is the Queen of philology, is the New philology.

ORDEAL BY POISON AMONG THE PRIMITIVE PEOPLE OF BELGIAN CONGO

THE NATIVE POINT OF VIEW

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I

It is customary to represent justice by a balance, of which the extended arms (the sections of the bar) firmly hold up the plates in exact equilibrium.

This emblem calls up various reflections.

Here I intend to institute a comparison which is perhaps quite original: the symbolic balance also represents the problems of colonization.

The principles of colonization (which nobody calls the bars!) are equally idealistic and rigid; and practical experience shows that its "plates," by which I mean *the point of view of the natives* and *the point of view of the whites*, are mobile. Their equilibrium and their relative stability are desirable in the interest of sane colonization as in the exercise of justice.

The whole problem of an intelligent and far-sighted colonization consists essentially in this constant confrontation and in the search for this just reciprocal equilibrium.

Analogous cases are not at all rare.

As a homage to Śrī Ramakrishna, the noble apostle of mutual

¹ Published by the Advaita Ashram, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas, in November, 1937.—ED.

understanding and sympathy among peoples, I should like to attempt here, following the initial postulate, an analysis of a very characteristic institution of Belgian Congo—the ordeal by poison.

We shall study it here at first from the indigenous point of view, that is to say according to their conception of their law.

The institution selected offers various advantages of study. It is known in details and takes us deep into the sentiments and beliefs which the natives consider to be essential. Hence it is possible to examine and elucidate its form and foundation with precision.

II

The ordeal by poison among the Bwakas, an important Sudanese people of the District of Congo-Ubangi, is still in a pure state. It has not yet been contaminated by neighbouring indigenous influences, and it is not of foreign inspiration. This custom is derived from ancient times. Its purpose is to justify the native accused of sorcery, theft or misconduct, while its denegation is not admitted by the community. Exposed to public contempt and reprisals of the aggrieved party—or at least the party which considers itself to be aggrieved,—the accused absorbs the poison prescribed by custom and awakes its effects,—a decisive sentence. The innocence is demonstrated if he spontaneously throws out the poison. If on the other hand he retains it, and submits to its effects, his guilt is proved. The culprit is now to be punished unless the native society lets him go on payment of a pecuniary indemnity proportional to the injury caused and prescribed by customs.

These are clearly sacred rites developed according to a traditional sequence. Let us now analyse the constant features of this native law. At the foundation of this custom is the general faith in the justice of a Supreme Being, as well as in the teaching that He has created all human beings and He judges them. He exculpates the innocent and punishes the guilty. This faith is firmly established in the heart of the native. As the justice of man has not been able to solve the problem, the justice of God

will decide the issue. He is the Supreme Judge. His decision is accepted without reserve by the whole community.

A fundamental and general religious belief is, therefore, at the basis of the institution of ordeal by poison: it is indeed a true ordeal.

Just as the human being reaches the supreme court only through successive stages, in the same way does the native approach the Supreme Judge. The human cedes to the Divine. This method, considered to be just and decisive, is further implemented by the respect due to ancestors, for it is they who have transmitted this custom. This single fact on the other hand is sufficient to make them venerable.

This custom is thus venerable both from the point of view of human prescience and from that of religious reverence. It is solidly implanted on the two species of authority which are neither disputed nor disputable, and which are at the basis of normal indigenous society.

III

If we now proceed to study the procedure of this judicial institution, we shall discover that the accused possesses a whole series of safeguards. First and foremost, the greatest possible publicity. The accusation of sorcery, which is the most common cause of ordeal by poison, is public. It emanates from the community itself (relations, friends, *clan-confrères* of the native who is ill or dead) or from the Divine, the recognized intermediary qualified to formulate the action of occult forces, and consequently to determine the imputation. Its technique is considered to be normal, because people resort to it publicly and on a long tradition. If it was believed or even seriously suspected that the Divine was an impostor, the chief, the notables, the parties to the debate, the community living according to its beliefs and customs (that is to say in so far as they are uninfluenced by the whites) would protest against the procedures. But the normal indigenous society believes in sorcery and in its interpreter—the Divine. In the eyes of the natives an accusation emanating from

Him is not arbitrary. For even though the accusation normally fixes the imputation, it is not what decides the sentence.

In fact it is *not* the Divine Who chooses the poison for the ordeal. The choice is fixed by custom. It is the accused himself who gathers the poison. And it is again he who prepares it immediately before the ordeal, publicly and in conformity with the rules about its quality and quantity prescribed by custom. All the rites of absorption are public and traditional. The poison adopted for the ordeal is not mortal. After taking it the native invokes the justice of the Supreme Being by pronouncing sacred formula at the top of his voice. When he traverses the place of ordeal in the presence of all the villagers assembled, and when he proclaims his innocence by regularly and successively throwing on the ground the sticks of cerement which he carries in his hand, at every instance he expects a verdict which no longer depends on men. In the eyes of the natives it is only the Supreme Being Who decides the deliverance or the ruin of the accused. The accused submits to His will with the acquiescence of all.

The procedure is exactly the same when the accusation is one of theft or misconduct ; here too, the accused himself absorbs the poison and here too, one of his near relatives supplies him with it (if he is too young).

IV

It is clear from these data that the ordeal by poison among the Bwakas constitutes a regular judicial procedure. It is based on profound and sincere beliefs: the faith in the justice of the Supreme Being; the fear of sorcery; the desire for probity; the respect and desire for the chastity of women. This ordeal, traditionally handed down and recognized by everybody in normal indigenous society, bears the stamp of high morality. To proscribe it without further consideration is an error and a clumsiness at one and the same time.

However exceptional they may be, they are nevertheless not less opportune. It will be seemingly proper also to remember in this connection that the indigeneous societies had on their part

discovered the statute proper to their equilibrium only after centuries of research. Before deliberately closing up a past consecrated by so many traditions, it will be proper perhaps to weigh carefully in this symbolic balance, at the side of the point of view of the present occupant, the point of view of secular occupant. The harmony of their relations, their mutual comprehension and their useful and durable bearing on each other, will be benefited by it.

TWO INDIAN MODES OF REVELATION:

THE UPANISHAD AND THE GĪTĀ

PROF. PAUL MASSON-OURSSEL

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The revelation inherent to the Vedic sounds heard by the great seers, the Rishis, is viewed as the substance of all orthodox revelation. Yet it is not the only revelation recognized by Brāhmaṇism.

After the revelation by 'word' or 'sound,' explained in the *Brāhmaṇa*, the *Upanishad* revelation appeared, which pertains to the 'significance.' To seek, and further—a *fortiori*—to elucidate the significance enclosed within the rite: this testified to a great audacity. Such a venture could only see the light of day in that millennium during which so many religions of salvation appeared,—from Egypt or Syria to the Punjab, in connection with Zoroastrianism,—all of them ministering to entirely different needs from those to which the former ritualistic religions ministered. The Upanishads are the mysteries of India; the initiations supplied by them regarding destiny after death are very secret, because they were not included within the traditional cult; therefore only those whose intelligence had been trained by a *guru* could have access to them. The revelation expressed therein is a metaphysical lucidity acquired by venerable sages, who do not even all belong to the Brahmin caste; it consists of a gnosis which coincides with the fundamental nature of Being.

From the time of the Epic period a new form of revelation appeared, expressing itself through the *Gītā* literature. While Bhagavān Śrī Kṛishṇa's *Gītā* is the most famous, it has had both precedents and imitations. In a *Gītā*, we meet with a revelation of the Absolute by Himself. This revelation is all at once lyrical, didactic and theophanic. A divinized and entirely superhuman Saviour proclaims Himself to be the very essence of Being, wherefrom originate all the forms of existence. He wishes to be revered in all things; consequently the motive of every action should never be interest, but sheer love for Him. Moreover, devotion is only rendered possible, thanks to the gift by which the Bhagavān condescends to confer His grace to men. Here, the quest of salvation has become a religion of *bhakti*, for the Absolute should fail to be recognized if He did not allow the devotee to participate in Him: knowledge alone would not ensure liberation.

Thus, the Upanishad and the *Gītā* became complementary revelations. That is why several Upanishads of the middle period have some *bhakti* contents and can be compared to the *Gītā*, while some *Gītās* propound Upanishadic ideas. On the one hand, the human intelligence attains the Absolute through its quest; on the other hand, the Absolute manifests itself to man. By the Upanishad the Sages partly lift the veils which hide Being Itself in a direct manner, by a song pulsating with the very rhythm of Life.

THE THREE SOULS OF MAN IN DANTE'S HELL

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Most of the modern psychologists are of opinion that the self of every individual, i.e. the individual psyche, is the result of a series of psychic formations—some inferior and others superior—co-existing in the same individual: the inferior formations are those which we have inherited from our primitive and barbarian

ancestors, whereas the middle and superior formations are those which have been created by evolution and which are still being created by education. This mode of envisaging the self is above all a creation of the Italian School of Criminology, also called the Italian School of Criminal Anthropology, which was founded by Cesare Lombroso with his work *L'uomo delinquente* of which the first edition appeared in 1776. This work already at that epoch considered certain criminals as men with psychically bestial and savage characters due to a *psychic atavism*, or again, to a phenomenon of arrested psychic development in the man, to psychically infantile formations which are on that account primitive and barbarous: and all this is due to the fact that the individual psychic evolution is the repetition (in accelerated rhythms) of the psychic evolution of the same order (Lombroso repeatedly says that the child is not an angel but a little savage and sometimes even a demon).

THE DOCTRINE OF DANTE AND SOME SCHOLARS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

We now propose to indicate here in a few words that something analogous to the theory just mentioned had been presented by Dante already in the heart of the middle ages to the Italian readers of his *Convivio*. It is, moreover, this theory which enabled the poet to achieve the moving and living creation of some of the superb personages of his *Inferno*.

It is true that cultured men, scholars and humanists of all kinds are familiar not only with Dante's *Inferno* which along with *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, constitute a sort of familiar bible for all cultured men, but also the *Convivio* and the *Dialogues* and the *Arguments* of a Florentine author of the sixteenth century; yet, so far as I know, none of them has tried to show to what a degree these pages resemble the modern psychological theories of which we have spoken. Even the professional psychologists have not made this comparison. It will be therefore interesting to show that these ancient pages contain much that is modern, though hitherto ignored and unsuspected.

THE THREE SOULS OF DANTE: THE TRIANGLE, THE SQUARE
AND THE PENTAGON

Dante said that three kinds of souls co-exist in every man: the vegetative soul, the sensitive soul and the intellective soul. Or rather three kinds of potences of which the sensitive potency is immediately above the vegetative, and the intellective potency immediately above the sensitive. As soon as the soul is delivered of the intellective potency, man will cease to be a human being and will become a mere sensitive creature—that is an animal and a brute. Dante repeatedly speaks of this trinity of the soul. He says for example, the three potences of human soul are to be found one above the other in the same fashion as a square is above the triangle and the pentagon above the square: each of these figures, i.e. of the three potences of human soul, contains something more than what is found below, and he further states that the man, if deprived of his rational soul, will become something like a pentagon of which one of the sides has been taken away. The pentagon is transformed into a square and the rational man is reduced to a mere sensitive creature. Now, are there in reality any men who are without this superior and rational soul? Then what is their conduct? They are not men, says the poet, they are dead; they are dead as men, living only as beasts.

DIFFERENT SORTS OF MEN

It will not be difficult to collect from the work of the poet passages showing to what degree Dante's conception of the human soul approaches quite modern theories, as for example of the Italian School of Criminology. Regarding the different species of men, the poet says that they are born and live with souls which are more or less pure according to the quality of the seed and the field. This manner of looking at the thing cannot but be of great interest for the doctrine of the soul of three "stages" of which we have spoken above.

THE CRIMINALS AND DEGENERATES OF DANTE'S INFERNO

It will now be understood why and how Dante had been able to paint the criminals and degenerates with so much vigour and

clarity, and with such a profound sense of the truth: who could have been criminal or degenerate to the poet if not the man who lacks the rational and superior soul, and who therefore acts blindly, egotistically and nefariously with a material and brutal sensibility? Under the human physiognomy the man-brute at every instant appears as more or less human corresponding to the criminal and degenerate of Dante. This is most clearly indicated by the poet in his description of the assembled devils in diabolical company in the twenty-second canto of the *Inferno*. It will be necessary to remember in this connection the concept prevailing at that time of the beast and of animal psychology: was not the animal charged with the most abominable ignominies, cruelties and crimes? That was a psychology the traces of which are a living force even today—a psychology which, however, has to be subjected to a process of radical revision. But let us consider the theory just as it was then. It will reveal to us the mental mechanism which guided the poet when he created those unforgettable figures of the damned. Were not the criminals and degenerate persons those whose “psychic atavism” marked every gesture by the sign of a bestial inferiority? We shall of course use the modern terminology, particularly that of Lombroso, for explaining Dante’s doctrine; but the shock which the reader may receive from this anachronism will appear to be purely superficial if he reflects on the subject. Often people have criticized those who imagined to have discovered in Dante what existed only in their own minds, and presented the poet as the precursor of all that the following centuries have brought us. In this way Dante has been considered by turn as a doctor, botanist, physician, ethnographer, geologist, psychiatrist or even as a penalist of the first order, an economist, philosopher of social life, etc., etc.—and all that, be it understood, in the modern sense of the word,—that is to say, that they believe to have been able to prove the most astonishing anticipations in the thoughts of the great Italian poet of the fourteenth century. It is true that these different modes of viewing and interpreting Dante have often been sharply criticized; but we do not believe that the same fate is in store for our observations too: we do not affirm that Dante was the precursor of the Italian School of Criminal Anthropology:

we shall only say that Dante's conception of human soul had led the poet to conceive the psychology of criminals in the manner in which it was conceived later by him who founded his interpretation of criminality on the doctrine of psychic atavism. Without making of Dante a precursor not only of Lombroso but also of Freud we may further add that Dante's conception of the human soul led the poet to see in the self of every man the co-existence of different selves—the inferior and the superior—in mighty struggle against each other.

ARISTOTLE

Aristotle too, has preached the same doctrine, and Dante himself was inspired by the naturalist Greek philosopher. Aristotle started with the principle that "every modification of the soul is accompanied by a corresponding modification of the body."..... Man has all the faculties of plants and animals, and he possesses, moreover, thought and intelligence and some other analogous faculties which may be even superior. In short the nutritive soul, the sensitive soul and the intellective soul form together the man proper in Aristotle's opinion. It is true that we do not find in Aristotle any indication as to the existence of men without any superior soul, or of the mechanism by which this superior soul can or cannot dominate the inferior souls which are the property of animals and the vegetable world. All this, however is mentioned by Dante on several occasions.

ANOTHER MASTER: PLATO

It is in fact necessary to go back to Plato for the doctrine of three souls, although it is found in the master of Aristotle in a form which is different from that of the doctrine of Aristotle and Dante. Had not Plato too taught: "The human soul is composed of three parts—the first is the part of reason, the second the excandescent part, and the third the affective part?" Did he not affirm at the same time that every creature enjoys health and is in possession of its forces and its beauty only so long as the part of reason governs the whole soul, and that so long as the two other secondary parts, choler and voluptuousness,

are in harmony with each other the soul remains in equilibrium? There will be weakness in the contrary case, when the part of reason, which should be the queen and mistress, allows itself to be subjugated by the despotism exercised by the two secondary souls.

The theory that the human conduct changes according as it is the superior or inferior soul which dominates it, has formed a basis of psychological theories on the structure of the soul and human conduct for many centuries. Yet there are on this subject pages which have been completely ignored by the psychologists and the investigators of the self. These pages were written in the sixteenth century at Florence and represent one of the jewels of the Italian literature. It is our intention to draw the attention of the readers to these forgotten pages and their significance for psychology. It is the *Dialogues and Reasons* of Giovanni Battista Gelli, a Florentine of the sixteenth century. The author observes among other things that "the man obeying the most vegetative instincts will become like a plant; if he lets himself to be seduced by the sensitive instincts he will resemble animals. He will become almost like the gods only if he raises his head to contemplate the sky." The men are of such different kinds and "some have so much talent and genius and others so little that one may say of them that they resemble the gods, whereas others have the appearance of veritable brutes, so that one may justly ask if they at all possess a rational soul."

The inferior soul, which renders us bestial, is full of horrors for our Florentine: for it is responsible for a large part of the "primitive tendencies" of the Italian School of Criminology and the "profound" instincts of the school of Freud. "Our insatiable desires naturally dispose us to be inimical to one another to the point of throwing poison mutually; and each of us passes his life in searching for the manner in which he could enrich himself to the detriment of others." "We must do everything to have our sensitive part dominated by the rational; it is the only way to live in peace with one's own self. Otherwise there will be continual war between the sensitive and the rational."

This Florentine writer of the sixteenth century was a veritable

psychologist, and a pessimistic psychologist, for the more one dives into the depths of the self of men the more one learns to disbelieve them and to look at them in a light which is not very favourable. The author says further: "It is of the nature of man that are born so much tumult, ambushes and nefarious manoeuvres; and wherever you may go you will never find a place where there is not so much enmity as not to tempt you rather to live your life in solitude and deserts with the most cruel animals than live among the men of the best governed country that exists."

THREE STAGES OF SOUL AND CRIMINALITY

In connection with the co-existence in the self of every individual of lower, middle and higher psychic formations, and the biological and bio-pathological reasons which thrust forward the lower formations to the surface, thus rendering the man anti-social, it will not be out of place to refer the reader to certain of our publications, particularly *La transformacion del delito en la sociedad moderna*.¹ It is precisely by placing ourselves in the perspective of a self envisaged as a conglomerate of various psychological layers, that we discussed a *latent criminality* which is actively present in the heart of every man. Every one of us possesses in his heart the complete architecture of these successive constructions, and therefore in every one of us there exists at the very foundation of our being a latent criminality, and it is impossible to say when it will reveal itself in the light of day.

This profound and latent criminality comes to the surface also when the superior and social strata of the self have not been definitely constituted on account of the imperfection and inferior quality of the social and economic atmosphere in which the individual has been brought up. These external and mesological facts act with a force which is more than dynamic as their influence on individuals is marked even by some external signs of biological inferiority. Thirdly, these psychic crises may take place from time to time even in men in whom the formation of the self is complete and stabilized even in its most delicate forms—

¹ Madrid 1902, *Biblioteca de derecho y ciencias sociales*.

the psychic crises which alter and even destroy for the moment the "superior" personality and bring to the surface, be it for a moment, the secret flame.

THREE STAGES OF THE SOUL AND THE SECRET FLAME

In a series of brief ethnographical studies under the title "*The Secret Flame*" and Carlyle's dictum, "*Under the bark of civilization there still burns the secret flame of barbarism*" as epigraph, we have passed under review a very large quantity of usages, customs and superstitions which, though characteristic of the masses of our country, prove at the same time that these masses always retain in the tenebrous regions of their heart a series of instincts, sentiments and beliefs belonging precisely to these inferior strata of the self of which we have spoken so far. The secret flame explains the incongruous usages and beliefs which are frequently found grafted on the magical and prelogical ideas in the primitive soul. For at the foundation of even the most civilized individual there are found in some obscure forms some psychical stages which, if one may say so, are at the same time ideas, instincts and sentiments, which dominate the sentimental and mental life of the primitives: these are the psychic states which have been called by some ethnographical schools magical or prelogical ideas.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE CHANḌĪ

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The subject-matter of this short paper is very definite. The following four points only have been discussed here:—(1) What is the *Chanḍī*? (2) Its probable date. (3) The place of its origin. (4) Its traditional allegorical meaning.

(1) WHAT IS THE CHANḌĪ?

Chapters 81–93 of the *Mākaṇḍeya Purāṇa* form the *Chanḍī* or the *Devīmāhātmya*, a glorification of the Goddess Durgā. The story of the *Chanḍī* was first narrated by the sage Medhas to Suratha and Samādhī. That was repeated by Mārkaṇḍeya to Bhāguri and the very same story was repeated by the birds to Jaimini and thus the story is known as ‘the conversation of the six—*Ṣaḍ-Samvāda*.’ As it contains seven hundred stanzas it is also known as the *Sapta-Satī*. Two other books—the *Rudra Chanḍī* of the *Rudrayāmala Tantra* and the *Chanḍī-Sataka* of Bāṇa Bhaṭṭa are based on this poem. The holy poem *Chanḍī* is as sacred and popular as the *Gītā* itself. Almost the very same truths are enunciated in both the books. There are many parallel lines in these two books.¹ Both of them are designated as the *Sapta-Satī*. The *Argala Stotra* says—‘*Japet saptaśatim chaṇḍīm.*’ Nāgoji Bhaṭṭa records—‘*Agnisomādhyāyavati Gītā saptaśatimatā*. Like the *Gītā* the *Chanḍī* has many commentaries on its text. Ātmārāma Vyāsa, Ānanda Paṇḍita, Ekanātha Bhaṭṭa, Kāmadeva, Kāśinātha, Gaṅgādhara Bhaṭṭāchāryya, Gopinātha, Govindarāma, Gauḍapāda, Gourivara Chakravarti, Jagaddhara, Jayanārāyaṇa, Jayarāma, Nārāyaṇa, Nṛsiṃha Chakravarti, Pītambara Miśra, Bhagīratha, Bhāskara Rāya, Bhīmasena, Raghunātha Maskari, Ravindra, Rāmākṛiṣṇa Sāstri, Rāmānanda Tīrtha, Vyāsāśrama, Vidyāvinoda Vṛindāvanaśukla, Virūpāksha, Saṅkara Śarma, and Śivāchāryya have written commentaries on the text of the *Chanḍī* which are still available. Thus it appears that the *Chanḍī* is as popular in India, specially in Bengal, as the *Gītā*. The book is considered sacred not only by the Hindus but also by the Buddhists. A copy of the *Sapta-Satī Chanḍī*, written by a Buddhist monk, of eight hundred years old, is found in Nepal.

(2) ITS DATE

(1) In 1172 A.D. Saraṇadeva, a Bengalee scholar, quoted some

¹ Cf. “*Yadā yadāhi Dharmasya glānirbhavati Bhārata . . .*” (*Gītā*) and “*Itham yadā yadā bādha dānavoḥā bhaviṣyati . . .*” (*Chanḍī*): “*yachchāpi sarvabhūtānām bijam tadakamarjuna . . .*” (*Gītā*) and “*Ekavāhaṁ jagatyatra dūtīyā kā mamāparā . . .*” (*Chanḍī*): “*Yomām paśyati sarvatra sarvaṁ cha mayi paśyati . . .*” (*Gītā*) and “*Nityevasā jagannmūrti tvayā sarvamidam tatam . . .*” (*Chanḍī*).

twelve passages from the *Chanḍī* of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* for grammatical discussion.

(2) M. M. Haraprasad Sāstri found a copy of the *Devīmāhātmya* in old Newari characters in the Royal Library in Nepal, and it is dated 998 A.D.

(3) In the Goth-Monglod inscription of 608 A.D., we find, says Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, the following two lines of the *Chanḍī* quoted with slight variation:

Sarvamaṅgalamaṅgalye Sive sarvārtha sādha(i) ke
(S)aranye trā(y) mbake Gaurī Nārāyaṇī namo'stute

(4) Daṇḍin,¹ Bhavabhūti,² and Bāṇa Bhaṭṭa³ have anticipated the existence of the *Chanḍī* in their respective works. The *Rudra Chanḍī* of the *Rudrayāmala Tantra*,⁴ also does the same thing.

(5) The *Argala Stotra*, the *Vārāhī Tantra*,⁵ the *Skanda Purāṇa*, the *Devīpurāṇa*, the *Devi Bhāgavata*, the *Kālikā Purāṇa*, the *Brihannandikesvara Purāṇa*, the *Vāmana Purāṇa*, and such other works, directly or indirectly anticipate the existence of the *Chanḍī*.

(6) Again, the sixth verse in chapter eight of the *Chanḍī* mentions the Maurya soldiers. In the fifth and sixth verses of the first chapter the *Kolāvidhvamsi yavaṇas* are mentioned.

(7) Prof. F. Eden Pargiter, Boden Sanskrit scholar of Oxford, who has translated the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* into English maintains the view that some portions of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* were no doubt composed in the third century A.D. But the *Chanḍī* is a later interpolation. Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar does not agree with Prof. Pargiter on this point. Professor Bhandarkar says, 'The existence of the *Devīmāhātmya* as independent of the *Purāṇa* has not been proved. The *Chanḍī* may perhaps be not as well connected, as one might wish, with what precedes and follows it. But we must remember that we should not expect in a *Purāṇa* that

¹ *Ekam Chanḍikā mandiram prāgām, . . .*

² *Devi Chāmunde nanaste . . .*

³ *Achira mṛḍita madhukaitabha rudirāruṇena . . .*

⁴ *Paṭhedārabhya sāvārpiḥ sūryatanaya āditah' . . .*

⁵ *Stavānāmapī sarvesham tathā saptaśatistavaḥ.*

⁶ *Māhātmyam bhagavatyaścha purāṇādishu kīrtitam.*

kind of co-ordination of its parts that we meet with in a novel or a drama.

From these and such other evidences it may be concluded that the *Chanḍī* was composed between the third and the sixth century A.D., and we regret that we cannot agree with Prof. Wilson, who says that it may be placed in the ninth or the tenth century A. D.

(3) THE PLACE OF ITS ORIGIN

Professor Pargiter asserts very emphatically that the *Chanḍī* did not originate in Bengal. The Goddess whom the poem glorifies is Śiva's consort. One would, therefore, look among the strongholds of Śiva worship for the birthplace of this poem. Of the great Liṅga shrines which are reckoned to be twelve, no less than six are situated in or near a certain region of Western India, viz. Omkāra at Mandhātā, Mahākālā at Ujjain, Tryambakā at Nāsik, Gṛīṇeśvara at Illorā, Nāganātha in the east of Ahmednagar and Bhīmaśaṅkara at the sources of the river Bhīma. Mandhātā was on the south bank of the river there. According to Professor Pargiter, at none of them except at Omkāra was Śiva or Durgā worshipped with sanguinary rites. This region of the Narmadā valley was specially connected with demon-legends, such as the demon stronghold of Tripura and the demon Mahisha, after which the towns Tewar and Mahesar are said to have been named. Mandhātā with such associations would be the most probable birthplace of this poem. The only local allusion in the poem is that the goddess is 'Mahākālī at Mahākālā'¹ which is a shrine of Śiva at Ujjain. But this allusion is very brief and this brief allusion would be only a collateral one. It is hardly probable that if this poem originated at Ujjain, the goddess at the shrine of Mahākālā should be referred to in this manner. Hence this passage more probably conveys only a commendatory allusion; and it seems more natural and appropriate to connect the poem with Mandhātā. Even if the poem were composed at Ujjain, the conclusion would still remain good that the poem originated in a region of Western

¹ "Mahākālī Mahākālā."

India. Anyhow it is certain that the poem did not originate in Bengal. This is the summary of the view of Prof. Pargiter.

It remains still obscure to us why this poem of the Goddess could not have originated in Bengal, Mithilā or Kāmarūpa.

(1) It is probable that the poem in glory of the Goddess. originated in a *Piṭha* or a place where some limb of the Goddess is supposed to have fallen, rather than in a shrine of Siva. Most of the *Piṭhas* are situated in Bengal and some of them are very old.

(2) Most parts of Bengal were, for a long time, covered with huge jungles. The aborigines of those forests were known as the Kirātas or the Śabarās. The *Daśakumāra Charita*, the *Kādambarī*, the *Harivaṃśa*, the *Bhavishyottara Purāṇa*, the *Kālikā Purāṇa* and such other works give evidence of the fact that the Goddess glorified in the *Chañḍī* is the deity of the Kirātas and the Śabarās. So it is more probable that the poem originated in a country which belonged to the Kirātas.

(3) The merit of reciting this poem, the rules of reciting it, the regulations of worshipping the Goddess *Chañḍī*, all these are described in the Tantras. The poem *Chañḍī*, though not a conversation between the God Śiva and the Goddess Pārvaṭī, contains the essence of the Tantras. Thus it appears that the *Chañḍī* is more a Tāntric work than a Paurāṇic which is Vedic. The *Rudra Chañḍī*, of the *Rudrayāmala Tantra* which refers directly to the *Chañḍī*, makes this point sufficiently clear. Scholars are almost unanimous regarding the view that most of the Tantra works were composed in Bengal.¹ If the *Chañḍī* be considered as a Tāntric work, then it is very probable that it originated in Bengal.

(4) In composing poems dedicated to the Mother Goddess, Bengal has superiority over all other countries. The Divine Mother first appears in and as the worshipper's earthly mother, then as his wife, thirdly as Kālikā. This idea of the Tantras is more fully developed in Bengal than in any other country. It may safely be stated, in this connection that the religion of the Bengalees is Tāntricism. The main characteristic of the Tāntric

¹ *Gauḍe prakāśitā vidyā maithilāih pravatikṛitāh, kvachit kvachit mahārashṭre gurjare pralayamgatāh.* In the *Varadā Tantra*, tenth paṭala the Bengali alphabet is described.

worship is the conception of the Motherhood of God and this characteristic is very prominently propounded in the *Chanḍī*.

(5) The King Suratha and the merchant Samādhi made an earthen image of the Goddess and worshipped Her with incense, flowers, fire and *homa*. This practice of worshipping the Goddess in an earthen image is rarely heard of outside Bengal, Mithilā and Kāmarūpa. This also goes in favour of the view that the poem originated in Bengal.

(6) Mother worship, if not originated, was developed in Bengal. The *Chanḍī* is a poem of the worship of Mother. So it is very likely that the book was composed in Bengal.

(7) The Bengalees have ever been very fond of using alliterations. The poet Jayadeva justifies this statement. In the poem *Chanḍī* too we find this special characteristic of the Bengalee poets. Moreover, the alliterations in the *Chanḍī* are of a special kind. We find in it, expressions like *duḥkhenakshayam*, *Chikshurākhyo tīkshṇaiḥ*, *khaḍgapātaiḥ*, *khurakhopaiḥ* and such others in which similar pronunciation between *kha* and *ksha* makes alliterations. If the latter is pronounced as *ksha* then the alliteration is lost. It is the special mode of pronunciation in Bengal that *ksha* is pronounced almost like *kha*. In no other part of India, so far as we know, such peculiar pronunciation, due most probably to the influence of Prākṛita prevails. Similar expressions are *Yaiḥ santajya*, *Jānato'pi yathā*, or *Yuddhe jayanti* and such others where *ja* and *ya* are expected to be pronounced in the same manner as *ja*. This peculiarity in pronunciation is also Bengal's own. This also lends support in favour of the view that the poem *Chanḍī* originated in Bengal, a Bengalee devotee of the Goddess being its author.

This being the case, we fail to understand why Professor Pargiter asserted that the poem did not originate in Bengal.

THE STORY IN SHORT

The King Suratha having lost everything and the merchant Samādhi, being driven by his wife and children, went into the deepest forest and reached the hermitage of the sage Medhas.

There, too, the mind of the merchant was full of love and anxiety for his wife and children and the mind of the King still drawn towards his subjects. Both of them went to the sage Medhas and asked him to tell why the King was being attracted and why the merchant was still full of affection for his wife and children, who had driven him away from home. The sage replied that by Mahāmāyā man is bound to the world. The King and the merchant asked who she was whom the sage was calling Mahāmāyā. The sage replied, 'She is eternal, She is manifested as the universe. She has no birth or death. But for the good of the universe She has a sort of appearances and these appearances are called Her births. Saying this the sage described one by one the destruction of Madhu and Kaiṭabha, the killing of the demon Mahishāsura, and the slaying of the demons Sumbha and Niśumbha.

After this the sage said—'That mighty Goddess is born, again and again, in order to protect the universe. She destroys the worlds and creates them again. She pervades all the world. She has no birth, no death. This Goddess has deluded both of you. This She has done in the past, is doing in the present and shall do in the future. If you please Her, She will give you wealth, heaven, and *moksha* or Liberation.' On hearing these words of the sage the king and the merchant bowed down their heads to him and in order to see the great Goddess Mahāmāyā sat down on the bank of a river and recited the *Devī-sūkta*. They made an earthen image of the Goddess and worshipped Her. They kept all their senses under control and concentrated their mind fully on the Goddess. They offered their own blood to Her as animal sacrifice. They did this for three years when the Goddess was much pleased with them and She appeared before them and asked them to pray for boons. On this the King prayed that he might be a ruler of the universe in the next birth. He also prayed for the recovery of his kingdom in this life. The wise merchant, his mind having been freed from worldly taints, prayed that he might be blessed with true knowledge. The Goddess, bestowing on them the boons as prayed for, disappeared. Having obtained the boon Samādhi became liberated and Suratha became the Manu named Sāvarṇi.

(4) ALLEGORICAL MEANING

It is traditionally believed that there are expressions in the *Chaṇḍī* which do not bear their surface meaning. Standing on this, some suggest the following allegorical meaning of the *Chaṇḍī*.

The sage Mārkaṇḍeya in order to give a very popular and interesting explanation of the philosophical question, 'What is the nature of the Supreme God?' relates a beautiful poem and that poem is the *Chaṇḍī*.

When the three forces—*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*—remain in equilibrium, there is no creation. But as soon as this equilibrium is lost, the balance is disturbed and one of the three forces gets stronger than the others, then change and motion begin and evolution of all this goes on and the universe is created. When it quiets down, the universe still exists in a finer form. In the first chapter of the *Chaṇḍī* the sage Mārkaṇḍeya says that the Supreme God is in His quiet state. He is sleeping in the *Kāraṇavāri* or the Causal State. From this state by the disturbance of the three forces creation begins. Brahmā, the *rajas* force is the creating force. This truth is made clear by the sage in the story of the two demons—Madhu and Kaiṭabha, who are respectively the *sattva* or the protecting and the *tamas* or the destroying force of the Supreme God.

Unless they are subdued, *rajas* the creating force, cannot proceed with creation. The indescribable and unknowable power called Māyā of the Supreme God now roused His powers from the quiet state and thus *sattva* and *tamas* being subdued, creation began. Creation was not completed in a day or two. It took thousands of years. The battle of the sage also continued for thousands of years. Mahāmāyā subdued both *sattva* and *tamas*. The demons were killed on the thigh of *Brahman*. *Sattva* and *tamas* were subdued nowhere else but in Him and creation went on gradually evolving.

Sometimes the brutal propensities do take possession of us and make us mere human brutes, sometimes again, they are driven out by our divine propensities. The evil spirits in our hearts as well as in the outside world, are countless ; good spirits are also

countless. The sinful and vicious tendencies rise again when they are supposed to have been killed. They can be subdued with great difficulty. This truth is made clear by the sage in the story of 'the slaying of the demon Mahishāsura'—who is described as a human demon. He has taken possession of man, and all his godly propensities have been totally annihilated. All the celestial powers were required to be united to subdue the evil spirits of the earth. The Dānavas are but different bad passions such as anger, lust, etc. They are vice and sins taking forms. The Devas are the beneficial powers of nature. The united powers of all the gods created Chāṇḍikā. Men and gods were oppressed by the evil spirits, and She appeared to destroy them. The war of the Devas and the Dānavas is the struggle between the good and the evil. Good suppresses the evil. The demons Sumbha and Niśumbha are of the human shape but with a full demoniacal mind. These two demons with their countless hosts destroyed the sacrifices which produce virtue and righteousness by stealing libations for gods. They are the evil propensities. They destroyed virtue and righteousness in the world, they usurped the functions of the gods who are always engaged in doing good to the world and its creatures. But when these gods are defeated by the evil spirits, God in his great kindness towards man always destroys them and re-establishes the kingdom of righteousness. Such were Śrī Kṛishṇa, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, Sri Ramakrishna and others.

Sin tempts virtue to marry her with all the treasures of the world. But virtue does not agree and she is never defeated by sin. She weds only the virtuous, and that too, when man overcomes her and possesses her with great devotion. This truth is taught in the story of the killing of Śumbha and Niśumbha. Dhūmrālochana, Chāṇḍa and Muṇḍa are the representatives of evil spirits. They signify fearfulness. Sin and vice are fearful. God can destroy them only by becoming fearful. So Kālī the terrible Goddess issued forth from the forehead of the Great Mother Mahāmāyā or Chāṇḍikā in order to destroy the terrible demons. First, attempts should be made to drive away evil propensities by persuasion. When this fails, they must be

subdued by force. If sins and vices once take possession of the human heart, it is almost impossible to uproot them from it. One vice is removed and its place is at once occupied by another. So sin is Raktabija. With great difficulty, the great force of the Supreme Lord eradicates sin from the universe. One sin is destroyed, thousand others are produced. It can only be destroyed by rooting out its very seeds. The so-called different Devas are but one. This truth is exhibited by the sage Mārkaṇḍeya in his lines like *Ekaivāhaṁ jagatyatra dvitīyā kā mamāparā*. 'In this universe I alone exist.'

The book begins with two characters—one a powerful king and the other a merchant. The king is named Suratha and the name of the merchant is Samādhi. *Suratha* means 'enjoyer of pleasure' and *Samādhi* means 'one with God.' At the close of the book, we meet the king and the merchant true to their names. The king gets back his lost kingdom and enjoys it in peace, and the merchant becomes one with God. A man who becomes capable of subduing his evil propensities can attain whatever he desires. Even *moksha* or eternal freedom is not unattainable to him.

This meaning is hinted by Editor of the sacred *Chaṇḍī*. The author of the Sādhana Sāṅgrāma edition of the *Chaṇḍī*, suggests a deeper meaning of the story. Whatever may be the value of such meanings it cannot be denied that the Purāṇas contain many allegorical stories. Even Śaṅkara has accepted this meaning of the war between the Devas and the Asuras in his commentary on the *Chhāndogya*. Even if the allegorical meaning is not accepted the *Chaṇḍī* has its literary merits. "Some of the hymns breathe deep religious feelings, express enthusiastic adoration and evince fervent spiritual meditation. The descriptions of the battles abound with wild and repulsive incidents, and revel in gross and amazing fancies."

In conclusion I adore the Goddess Chaṇḍī with the gods Indra, Agni and others in the words of the sage Mārkaṇḍeya—"O Goddess, all learning and knowledge are Thy forms, all the women of the world are Thy portions. Thou alone remainest filling all this,—what adoration can we then offer Thee! Thou art

beyond and above all adorations. We bow down our heads to thee, O Goddess Nārāyaṇī, Thou art the Good in all the good of all beings, Thou art the Beneficial—Thou art the maker of all success—Thou art the protectress of all—Thou art of the three eyes and Thou art Gouri the beautiful—“and I pray—“ Destroy the sins of all the universe and remove from it the great dangers due to meteors and other misfortunes such as famine, plague, etc.”

RELIGION AND RATIONALISM IN ANCIENT HINDU CULTURE

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Religion and science, the well-recognized foundation on which rationalism takes its stand, are often spoken of as being mutually negatory and repellent. Religion, according to this view, assumes a set of abstruse doctrines and irrational dogmas which it is the bounden duty of the faithful to believe in and uphold. To be a true follower of and a pious believer in religion, it is essential that one should never infringe the bounds of belief, ritual and conduct as set by good old tradition.

The priest is the recognized exponent of this ancient wisdom. He keeps the torch of the sacred lore ablaze. He best understands the mind of the ancient sages. Their utterances are always at the tip of his tongue. Their esoteric implications are patent to him. He is thoroughly initiated into the secrets of their heart. His interpretations are standard; his word is law. A custodian of the old order of things and an advocate of the traditional convention as he is, he does not evince the least interest in or welcome any new suggestion, change or reform. In fact, he is the first to smell danger when the least innovation is proposed. He recoils at the most insignificant liberty taken by the less scrupulous of his folk. He hardly ever stands in need of a notice. No

sooner do you prick him than you find him already afield with the whole array of conservatism marshalled at his service.

Science, on the other hand, is another name for knowledge which it literally signifies. It is always in quest of fresh fields of research and discovery. It is ever on the look-out for new avenues of invention. It cannot brook the least delimitation of its range of progress. From the known to the unknown is its watchword. It dismantles the old and builds anew. It has no scruples and hardly any fears. Forthwith, it launches out into the dark abyss of the unknown domains of nature and struggles hard to secure a footing and, then, works up its way to become clearly visible in its onward march. It abhors darkness and loves light. It announces the beginning of its operations and publishes the results of its attainments. It does not pin its faith on any kind of surreptitious achievement, nor any mysterious guidance. It rather depends upon hard labour carried on in broad day-light and takes its stand on the firm ground of its own past experience.

Curiosity and examination, doubt and investigation are its agents-in-chief. Ever anxious to enlarge its vision and over-ride its bounds, it has little in common with religion which dislikes all change and has a strong craving for the preservation of the fixed order of things. Science can sacrifice everything else for the sake of finding out and establishing bare, unsophisticated truth. Unlike religion, it is no respecter of personalities and has no soft corner for any so-called gospel truths. It shines forth when close observation and persevering application finally get transformed into clear analysis and direct experimentation. On the contrary, religion reaches the final stage of glorification when in the wake of gradually advancing tide of external absent-mindedness, there follows the rare boon of the inexpressible but incomparably enjoyable and blissful divine merger. Science comes forward and forward on the wings of self-assertion and proclamation of new finds and new plans, whereas religion is always after retiring into self-forgetfulness and, to all intents and purposes, utter negation. Science believes in the ground on which it daily treads, but religion rejoices in ignoring that which is in hand here and seeks the realization of the most intangible prospects of hereafter.

Religion that has had a strong and not unoften, dictatorial voice in guiding the destiny and moulding the character of man during the last five millenniums and more has usually been of a personal type with a very strong and distinctive impress of its own. It came to be preached as a result of personal inspiration of different individuals who by virtue of their highly developed magnetic personalities were able to fix an indelible stamp on the successive generations of their adherents. Not only their ideas and doctrines commanded popular acceptance but, in course of time, their very names assumed the magnitude of individual divinities and became special objects of worship. And, gradually, such of their disciples as presumed to be their most lineal and, in consequence, authentic interpreters and exponents, began to employ their already deified names as a readily accessible and very efficacious means to curb the erratic and undesirable habit of free thinking and unrestrained investigation, if found anywhere among the general body of their followers. Certain tenets would be taught as final truths and their attribution to those holy teachers and gradually to God would be forced upon the popular mind as the strongest argument for their correctness. None would be suffered to raise a voice against them, for what was found to be wanting in persuasion would be made up for by coercion. Thus every movement of free thought would invite persecution. And what an irony of fate that in the very name of those who would be proclaimed to have appeared on earth as heralds of freedom and agents of emancipation, a considerable section of society should be turned into a close, compact, hell-like prison-house where even the least liberty to think in one's own way should be against the prescribed rules of discipline and as such, punishable like the grossest and vilest moral transgression!

True, there have been people who while adhering to religion, were, at the same time, some of the best friends of letters that the world has seen in the past. But they have been like the oases in an extensive desert, only few and far between. This factor in itself doubly adds to the lustre of those genuine lovers of learning and they will always be remembered gratefully by the world. But, in general, religious fanaticism has not been able to recognize

that light of learning knows no bounds of caste, creed or colour, and that as such, no matter what source it emanates from, it ought to be bowed to and honoured by all.

No wonder that rationalism reads the past annals of religion only to be confirmed in its view that things being as they are, it must fight its old rival off. Inch by inch, it has secured a considerable footing and is now busy fast building up its majestic stronghold upon it. A result in order to be acceptable to the intelligentsia of today has to be established in accordance with the best methods of science. Every branch of human culture has of late been undergoing a process of pruning, sifting and consistent definition. And, this has in turn led to the formulation of huge array of sciences unheard of before. There is no art, no craft and for the matter of that, no subject of study worth the name but has been forced to evolve and present itself in the form of a science of its own. And, strange as it is, we have, through this process of relegating everything to the domain of science, come to possess the Science of Religion itself.

With the gradual advance of this wonderful suzerainty of science, religion, at least in its popular aspect, has been losing ground. It used to derive its authority from the so-called fact of its having been supernaturally inspired. When this basic factor was called into question, the whole fabric seemed to go off its ground and collapse. It was really a very vehement attack that Western rationalism, well equipped with the armoury of scientific revelations, launched against the ancient bulwark of religion with the characteristic fury of a new convert.

But now that this warfare has been raging for so many restless years, one thing seems to have become evident that religion, especially in the form in which it was originally visualized, has also its own place in human economy and as such, it is not possible or, even, desirable to annihilate or even oust it entirely. It is beginning to be realized that instead of discarding either of them, man requires both religion and rationalism in order that he may safely pass through the successive stages of his evolution and securely reach his final consummation. His real interests will be served if religion as it emerges from this life and death struggle,

confines itself to its proper activities and permits itself to be shorn of all those illegitimate accessories which hardly ever helped anybody to rise spiritually but did prove a source of unnecessary irritation to many and, eventually, lead to wide-spread suffering and disaster. It will mean a restatement of the functions and readjustment of the spheres of both of these old rivals so that instead of negating, they may supplement each other.

It is interesting to see that some of the ablest and most constructive brains of today are already afield to find out some way to achieve this end. The old fury and vehemence seems to have been spent up. Hot-headedness of, say, forty years ago, appears to have been replaced by mutual regard and general considerateness of temperament. This comparatively calm atmosphere must be congenial to an early settlement. Why should religion not invest science with real life and itself receive a new charm, a new strength and a new vindication from its close touch with the latter? Alongside of the Science of Religion, why should we not also have the Religion of Science which may be a signpost, always pointing to the boundless ocean of spiritual life that is within us but of which we ordinarily remain unaware? That may be the foundation of the rationalized religion of tomorrow which will start by taking its cue from the methodology of science and systematically help mankind in the evolution of a fuller, brighter and happier life characterized by the right type of discipline, development and dedication.

The history of Hindu Culture affords a very interesting study from this point of view of mutual adjustment of religion and rationalism. Religion has always been very popular with the Hindus. Their mind seems to possess a special aptitude for it. Their genius has found its natural expression in evolving a world of religion, all its own. From the Raja to the peasant, they evince keen interest in theological themes and, very often, a passion for them. Their monumental works of art are almost always symbolical of some religious aspect, idea or feeling. The religious vision of their sages was, however, marked by a living sense of harmony, balance and compatibility between the claims of the several aspects of human life. According to them, the flesh and

the spirit, worldly progress and renunciation and here and here-after could be and should be treated as the fine strands of a string—taken singly, weak and useless but when worked into a beautiful whole, very strong and useful.

But strange though it may sound, the Hindus of yore could not really evolve anything which after the general credal pattern of religion might be designated as Hinduism. Certainly, they had a national system of life-conduct and social adjustment and we may use the word Hindu-dom for it. But this is very different from what Hinduism would ordinarily mean. Hindudom recognizes the need of a system of spiritual culture based on the right functioning of the head, the heart and the hand, that is, the intellectual, the emotional and the physical aspects of human activity. From times immemorial, people have differed as to what activity be right and what otherwise. Unlike the modern credal systems of organized churches, the Hindu system as a whole has invariably refused to identify itself with any one particular creed. Thousands upon thousands of creeds have appeared on the scene within the Hindu world. They have been and most of them still are organic parts of Hindudom inasmuch as their adherents are and do call themselves Hindus. But Hindudom is much more over and above them. Whereas it embraces and recognizes them as its own, it is not possible for them to encompass or circumscribe it. They are contained in it but it is not contained in them. A part is in the whole but the whole cannot be in a part.

And, so, ancient India of the Vedic sages went without a church of its own in the generally accepted sense of the term. A church cannot be built on the flowing waters of the Ganges. Besides the general ethical norm, it requires the adamant rock of a fixed ritual of a uniform type and a set of unquestionably settled dogmas for its proper foundation. There was enough of ritual in India of those days but it was neither uniform nor uniformly obligatory. There were numerous priestly families and their colleges and they followed and taught more or less varying liturgical compilations. The Vedic ritual, however, was equally present in all of them by virtue of the presence therein of its

generic background. Thus, everywhere the sacred fire would be lighted ; Vedic verses would be recited and in accompaniment thereof, offerings made.

Moreover, this ritual had been made graded in order that it might suit the needs of different capacities of different individuals. In other words, it could vary from individual to individual. No one ceremony was binding on all without any exception. Differentiation proceeded as much on the basis of an individual's position and profession (*varṇa*) in society as on the particular stage of his personal life (*āśrama*). And, then, there was the recognized case of those who would not be bound down to any ceremonial. They would be either retired recluses or wandering monks whom neither the desire for offspring, nor wealth, nor fame, nor any transcendental gain could lure or keep attached to the usual ceremonial routine of family-life. It was no fault of the people that they could not adhere to any one uniform type of ritual or any ritual at all. The Sacred Books themselves recognized the aforesaid gradation and varied application of ritual on the basis of different religious requirements of different individuals owing to the difference in their temperament, education, station in life and other environmental reactions and the consequent varying degrees of their development for the furtherance whereof, performance of every rite and ceremony was said to be prescribed.

Similarly, there was no dearth of serious thinking in ancient India. The Vedas combine richest poetical imagery and finest delicacies of literary style with highest flights of imagination, deepest notes of inner realization and clearest glimpses of intuitive vision. People were conversant with all sorts of dogmas and doctrines and they freely professed some and denied others. Thanks to the healthy mentality which recognized the limitations of the human intellect, free expression of opinion was the recognized birthright of every person in Hindudom. In fact, persecution for one's views seems to have always remained an unfamiliar phenomenon there.

Instead of gagging free expression, the cultural ideal of the Hindus has been to accord a place of honour to every new orientation of the ever-unsolved eternal problems and make an

earnest effort to assimilate it. There were thinkers even in the Vedic times whose views about the theory and practice of popular religion could in ecclesiastical parlance be described as having been heretic. But they did not make any distinction between what was to be considered as fundamental and therefore not to be questioned and what being of a subsidiary or secondary nature might be controverted. And, under those healthy conditions of fresh intellectuality, it could not be otherwise. What was solid foundation for one frame of mind might as well be only tentative starting point for another which, if in consonance with other data, would be adhered to and, if against the same, ignored and rejected. Thus there could be all sorts of different opinions on the so-called very vital matters. The names of some of the highest personages in the domains of Hindu ritual and philosophy have come down to us as having been associated with a great variety of views such as disbelief in the existence of gods, the utility of ritualistic observances, the existence of an eternal personal self, the Law of *Karma*, the cycle of re-births, the existence of a personal God, the theory of periodical creation and dissolution and the theory of phonetic eternity, to mention only a few typical cases. But in spite of these differences, they remained attached to the Hindu system. There has never been a single individual in the long history of Hindudom who might have had the temerity to stigmatize those illustrious leaders of thought and action as non-Hindus. On the other hand, they have been and are respected by every Hindu as great sages (*Rishis*) and teachers (*Āchāryas*) of his national culture.

From the outset, the Hindu mind seems to have been alive to the desirability of encouraging the growth of sound learning and all-round awakening. The most ancient treasures contain accounts of a considerable number of free discussions of deep, and knotty problems that confronted man's mind in those days. The rich and magnificent heritage of India's past may be regarded as an index to the friendly spirit and close association that must have been maintained through long ages between different types of intellectual workers on the one hand and the guardians of the priest-craft on the other. In sooth, the first inspiration towards

cultural progress came from the side of the Vedas themselves. They sang the sweetest songs in praise of cultured speech, developed intellect, profound learning and discriminating wisdom and raised these pillars of the strong edifice of rationalism to the position of gods to be hymned and worshipped. The ritualistic developments were also directly responsible for bringing into being a number of critical studies and observations. The exigencies of right pronunciation and comprehension of the ancient texts created a need for and gradually led to the brilliant development and formulation of the Sciences of Phonetics, Grammar and Philology. Similar circumstances were instrumental in directing the attention to the study and development of Metrics and Prosody. Ritualistic harmonization called forth the canons of textual criticism. The need of ensuring the efficacy of ritual performance by carrying it on at the right time combined with the love of the Vedic people for open-air life under the canopy of the heaven showed the way to their achievements in Astronomy. Their mathematical studies may also be traced back to the same source inasmuch as it was expected of the priest to be conversant with the mensuration as well as construction of multi-figured fire-altars and other structures connected therewith. Practice of medicine seems to have remained for long a part of the priestly profession. The Vedic lore, especially the *Atharva-Veda*, is full of useful references to herbs and drugs and their prescription in the cure of many diseases. The *Sāma-Veda* is the recognized fountain-head of Indian Music. This association of the ancient religious writings and their priestly custodians in contributing to the general cultural advancement is eloquent enough to show that religion and rationalism in the ancient Hindu society had admirably adjusted themselves with regard to each other's claims to, and domains of, activity and that both could equally feel proud of their respective contributions to the general cultural growth of their times. In fact, any indications of serious conflict between rationalists, scientists and philosophers as such on the one side and creed-bound, blind ritualists on the other are conspicuous by their absence in the Hindu tradition. In thousands of cases, priests themselves were the pioneers of their times in the fields of science and philosophy and in other innumerable cases, reputed scientists and philosophers

were born in well-known priestly families. This factor in itself shows that if there was any problem in the Hindu society as undoubtedly there was and still is, it was not in the form of a clash of two separate warring camps of rationalists and religionists but, on the other hand, it was in respect of the secularization and widened enfranchisement of learning so that the entire community should be in a position to taste its sweet fruit, instead of keeping it as the close preserve of the upper classes only. In other words, the problem that Hindudom has still to solve, has been a social and not a cultural one. As already indicated, Hindudom was originally conceived and developed as a system of individual life-conduct and social adjustment. It was based on the recognition of kinship born of community of race, language, country and general cultural traditions. It grew in extent from age to age through a characteristically original process of assimilation and accumulation. By virtue of this wonderful potentiality, it was able to absorb in and make one with itself all those innumerable nomadic tribes that crossed its north-western frontiers and settled down on its fertile plains like swarms of locusts. Many peoples entered India as conquerers, but the gradual working of this process left them here as equally faithful followers and co-partners of Hindudom. Religion had its prominent share in the application of this process. But, certainly, it was an entirely different thing from a mere religious conquest. It was a victory which reflected credit on the basic principles of entire Hindudom and not on religion alone which, in the sense of religiousness of the people, was an integral constituent of its composite conception but in the sense of one organized church for the entire people, it always remained foreign to its constitution.

It is the narrowing down of spiritual loyalties to the minimum number and what is even more potent in this respect than anything else, the presence of a personal factor that really gives the proper measure of strength to the organized establishment of a church. It may in course of time fall a victim to serious schisms and get ramified into a number of sects and sub-sects as has invariably and quite naturally happened in the history of every church, but the original stamp of loyalties and personal

factors sticks fast to all of them alike. It is on account of the indelibility of this impress, that howsoever divided among themselves they may be, sects of Christianity and Islam can be easily distinguished one from the other. For instance, there can be no Christian denomination without an implicit faith in the Bible as the Word of God and in Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of mankind. Similarly, every Muslim sect believes in the Koran as the embodiment of the Divine Dispensation and Mohammed as the last prophet of God. If faith in the existence of God were the real basis of religion and if the function of religion were to bind man to God as servant to his master or son to his father, and bind man to man as brother to brother, surely, both these great religions should long ago have recognized their mutual kinship inasmuch as the monotheistic concept of a personal God is common to them. Indeed, if God had been the determining factor, Islam would not have been distinguishable from Christianity and Christendom would not have entered upon the well-known Crusades against Islam for the recovery of the Holy Land. So it is not God that makes a Church ; it is the aforesaid personal factor coupled with the consolidation of loyalties around it that serves as the firm foundation on which the superstructure of an organized religion rears its majestic head. The standardized church mentality cannot recognize even its own professed God if He does not like to manifest Himself through its professed Prophet or Saviour and express Himself through its professed Holy Book.

While considering the secret of adaptability of the ancient Hindu culture to religion as well as rationalism, one is struck by the entire absence of the main factors that go to the making of an organized church-religion. The Hindudom of pre-Buddhistic days produced a great number of teachers and sages, but none of them was raised to the position of the one above all others. Every one of them was held in great esteem and his inspired words were listened to with rapt attention. In course of time, certain families came to specialize in the art of careful transmission and preservation of the wisdom of such sages of yore as were connected with them as their primary progenitors and later ancestors, respectively known as *Rishis* and *Pravaras*. This entire

accumulation went by the name of Veda which, by the way, is a philological cognate of the word *wisdom* itself. Originally every separate tribal unit had its own Veda but as those units gradually merged into one nation, so did their Vedas and their *Rishis* become the objects of common respect and regard. There was no idea that the line of *Rishis* had come to a stop and, so there could not be any ground for the corresponding idea of the textual finality of the Vedas. The result was that when after a long time, the Vedas as taught and learnt at different centres came to be put together, there appeared according to some, as many as eleven hundred and thirty-one recensions of the four main divisions, namely, the *Rig-Veda*, the *Sāma-Veda*, the *Yajur-Veda* and the *Atharva-Veda*. Most, if not all, of these recensions are supposed to have at one time independently possessed their own triple Vedic sets, namely, their *Samhitās*, *Brāhmaṇas* and *Upanishads* and, possibly, also their triple *Kalpasūtras*. In the presence of such a huge accumulation of the sacred literature which bore the stamp of successive generations of the primary sages who were characterized by original inspiration, of the secondary sages who explained those inspired outpourings and defined their application in respect of prevalent ritualistic routine, and of the tertiary sages who codified and aphoristically recorded the entire ancillary writings with a view to facilitating the study, comprehension and application of the Vedas, and which being a common, national heritage, was, generally speaking, held in uniform esteem, there could not arise at least for the whole community, any occasion of narrowing down of loyalties to any one personality of any one text. Whereas certain direct ancient priestly families continued to foster the study and application of their particular texts, there sprang up others who widened their scope and the words '*Dube*,' '*Tiwari*' and '*Chobe*' as applied to their descendants are to this day reminiscent of them. Similarly, in the domain of speculative allegiances, members of one and the same family could hold any views and belong to any persuasion. So long as philosophers did not interfere with the priestly organization of ritual, they might and did say anything they liked and soar as high and dive as deep as they could. In this way,

philosophic groupings cut through ritualistic divisions and prevented the growth of well-defined credal systems on a religious basis. The first pre-requisite of such an organization, on the other hand, is that its members should adhere to one definite line of belief and accept one common course of ritual. But the result of the aforesaid tendencies of the Vedic age was practically that there were distinct groupings on the basis of Vedic texts and ritual on the one hand and metaphysical and philosophic theories on the other and that every individual was more or less bound to the first as inherited from his immediate forefathers but free to make his own choice of the other. And Vedic ritual being symbolical from the first, he would in this way be in a position to invest his ritualistic performances with his own new meanings to satisfy his inner cravings and develop his own centre of emotional inspiration. This would be his true religion and, under the circumstances, it would be nothing short of a purely private and independent functioning of his rational and emotional selves. This development and maintenance for a long period of this happy harmony between these two most important aspects of human life from the point of view of general culture, was a very remarkable achievement of the Vedic Hindudom.

In its chequered career through ages, Hindu culture has had to pass through many an ordeal but it has always tried to save this peculiar impress on it intact. When within its body-politic, Buddhism and Jainism grew up in the shape of strong religious organizations and threatened to undermine its foundations, it reacted with a wonderful bump and not only saved itself but ultimately succeeded in re-absorbing most of the rebellious elements. It was under the stress of this or some other similar juncture that the textualist philosophers (*mīmāṃsakas*) evolved as a result of their over-exercised ingenuity, their pet theories of the eternity of word and the impersonal character of the Vedas. According to these views, as men, beasts, brutes, and birds spring up and as plants, creepers, shrubs and trees grow up under naturally conditioned circumstances, so do the Vedas as the manifest symbols of the eternal word appear of themselves in the minds of the primary sages who could not and have not left any

personal mark on them. As such, they were immune from the effect of human propensity to err and, therefore, were the final arbiter in all dubious and conflicting situations in human conduct, especially in matters connected with the invisible and intangible hereafter.

This fortification, however justifiable on account of its immediate utility in successfully combating the rival theories of the omniscience of certain high personages, gradually seems to have proved too hot for the rationalistic genius of the Hindu culture which soon evolved another theory, apparently, as a safety-valve. It propounded that the eternal elements of sound which entered into the formation of the Vedas, have a sort of potential energy on the basis and as a result of which, they may denote a number of things according as the context is intended to be applied to the esoteric, the ritualistic or the materialistic domain of life. In other words, they would be said to possess a fluid denotation which would not let them be bound down to any one particular line of interpretation or domain of human activity. Owing to the desirable effect of this theory in letting free the pent up forces of rationalism, it proved a timely boon to the priest and the philosopher alike. It led the way to a system of evolutionary or progressive exposition of the ancient texts. The energies of the priest, instead of being consumed by constant warring against new ideas, could now be usefully devoted to the task of making the old Vedic Kire yield fresh milk. And, for his part, the philosopher also could go on adding to the universal fund of knowledge and never feel hampered at any step on account of the orthodoxy standing in his way.

Thus, in that period, due respect for the ancient writings could in a very beautiful manner be harmonized with the due demands of the progressive rationalistic mind. On the basis of the afore-said theories, everybody was free to think in his own way and quote if he so desired, in support of his views the ancient texts which he could interpret according to his lights. His interpretations might be fanciful and untenable. Others might criticize and ridicule them, but there would not arise any exigency for the least manifestation of bitterness. It is only when a Church becomes as hard as rock as every organized, credal system of religion

is in course of time apt to, that its custodians not being able to appreciate the change that human mind gradually undergoes, show their real selves by unsheathing the sword of persecution and excommunication. If in India of the ancient Hindu cultural hey-day, there prevailed an atmosphere in which religious devotion could travel hand in hand with intellectual development without the expression of the least feeling of dissatisfaction on the part of the one or the other, it must have been substantially attributable, first, to the absence of all personal element as well as dead fixity in the Vedic system and then, in later times, to the formulation and application of the theories of progressive interpretation of the Vedas of a highly inclusive type.

THE BHAGAVAD-GITĀ AND THE TAO TE CHING

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"The nature of man is here clever and there stupid; and the one of these qualities may lie hidden in the other. The abuse of the nine apertures is chiefly in the three most important, which may be now in movement and now at rest. When fire arises in wood, the evil, having once begun, is sure to go on to the destruction of the wood. When calamity arises in a state, if thereafter movement ensue, it is sure to go to ruin.

"When one conducts the work of culture and refinement wisely we call him a Sage.....

"The blind hear well, and the deaf see well. To derive all that is advantageous from one source is ten times better than the employment of a host; to do this thrice in a day and night is a myriad times better.

"The mind is quickened by things, and dies through excessive pursuit of them. The spring of the mind's activity is in the eyes.....

"The method of spontaneity proceeds in stillness, and so it was that heaven, earth, and all things were produced. The method of heaven and earth proceeds gently and gradually, and thus it is that the Yin and Yang overcome each other by turns. The one takes the place of the other, and so change and transmutation proceed accordingly.

"Therefore the sages, knowing that the method of spontaneity cannot be resisted, take action accordingly and regulate it for the purpose of culture."

One of the services which a Parliament of Religions such as this must render is to help men and women to learn to formulate for themselves a new definition of Religion. At present people talk of their own religion and of other people's religions and are unable to pierce the veil of *māyā* which surrounds them all. There is a false sense and there is a true one, in which our own and other people's religions can be described. In the world the false view in general prevails. One of the reasons, perhaps the main reason, for this dual *māyā* is people's failure to study even their own religion, let alone the religions of others. An important way by which people can pass from false to true concepts of *Dharma* is by the comparative study of religions and religious philosophies. We must raise religion from the plane of belief to the plane of thought and demand that men and women labour to possess Faith—Enlightened Faith. Then only they will be able to escape from the two hells which surround us on every side—the hell of religious bigotry and superstition and the other hell of materialistic disbelief and sensuality.

The study of religious philosophy purifies the mind. The metaphysical propositions free the mind, for a short time at least, from narrow, personal, mean and petty thoughts. Centred as men and women are in their egotistic (*ahamkāric*) self, any release therefrom comes only when a change of mental focus takes place. One cannot be both Universal and egotistic, Impersonal and personal, at one and the same moment. What motor-power effects that change in polarity? Philosophical thoughts, metaphysical concepts and their analogues in ethics and morality. Ethical instruction raises the mind and elevates it and thus energizes us to become better, nobler, kinder, more loving.

There is an additional factor; dwelling upon words and ideas which are universal and holy truths and which have been spoken once or otherwise recorded is a phenomenon of *Sat-saṅga*—Good Company. The student touches the mind and the heart of Kṛishṇa when he ponders over the *Gītā*, of Lao-Tzu when he dwells upon the *Tao Te Ching*.

To be in the company of the Immortals is to secure the gift of true vision, of pure clairvoyance and clairsaudience—not seeing

invisible colours and hearing inaudible sounds, but understanding what we see and hear. In our world there is a craze for psychic phenomena, for abnormal and unusual experiences. A great deal of unconscious black magic and necromancy prevails, and as a protection against these the study of great books and the Company of the Immortals are necessary helps, enabling us not only to avoid the danger of falling into wrong practices, but also to learn the truth about them.

In our study of the two books, one Indian and the other Chinese, we need to say a few things about the *Tao Te Ching*; the magnificence of the *Gītā* is well known and to say anything about it to such an audience as this would be to waste its precious time.

A few words only are permissible about the *Tao Te Ching*. It is composed of 81 short chapters and some 5,000 Chinese characters; those who are interested in numerology may speculate about this number 81 and the 18 chapters of the *Gītā*. Unfortunately I do not know Chinese and what follows is based upon translations by eminent Sinologists. Different versions are used in this paper and in presenting each translation we have kept in mind the easy and ready comprehension of the text by the modern mind. But three authorities we must name,—James Legge, Lionel Giles, and Arthur Waley—who have revealed old China and Japan not only to the understanding of our minds, but also to the appreciation of our hearts.

The *Tao Te Ching* is 'The Book of Tao and Te'. 'Tao' and 'Te' are terms as untranslatable as our Sanskrit *Dharma*, *Karma*, *Nirvāṇa*, *Ātman*, and so forth. The concepts enshrined in these four Sanskrit words are enshrined also in these two Chinese terms. 'Tao' has been translated as 'Path;' 'Reason;' 'Word or Verbum;' 'Harmony;' 'Living Nature;' 'Law;' 'Absolute;' 'Perpetual Motion.' Sanskrit equivalents spring easily to mind: 'Mārga,' 'Buddhi,' 'Om' or *Pranava*; 'Rita;' 'Jiva;' 'Dharma;' 'Brahman' and so forth. In his *Chinese Religion Through Hindu Eyes* Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar compares Tao to *Sanātana Dharma* and so the book may be said to represent the Religion of the Eternal Way. De Groot describes Tao as 'the Way in which the Universe moves.'

Similarly, the word 'Te' has been translated as 'virtue;' 'action;' 'will.' Waley in examining the history of the word states that "it means something much more like the Indian *karma*." The Way of Action, whether will-action, mind-action, speech-action or body-action, is implied in the use of the word 'Te' in different contexts.

The metaphysics, psychology and ethics of the *Tao Te Ching* were not invented by Lao-Tzu. They are ancient teachings, and Lao-Tzu like Śrī Kṛishṇa but communicated the old, old Wisdom (*Gītā*, iv. 1).

Comparable to Ikshvāku, Manu, Vivasvat, are Hwang-Ti and his instructor Kwang-Tzu, who, it is said, practised Tao for 1200 years. The Chinese legends give the date of Hwang-Ti as 2700 B.C. which is but the Chinese variant of the period when Śrī Kṛishṇa opened the Kali-Yuga some 5000 years ago.

Just as 600 B.C. was a period in which flowered Confucius and Lao-Tzu in China, Buddha and Mahāvīra in India, the last of the Zoroasters in Iran, and Ezekiel and Isaiah among the Jews, so also 3000 B.C. was an important epoch in the cycle of human evolution when Hwang-Ti in China revealed the mystery of the *Tao* and Lord Kṛishṇa in India that of the *Om*.

Again, as the *Gītā* speaks of the previous appearances of Kṛishṇa, so too there are references to Lao-Tzu's earlier incarnations. In the stone tablets of Hsieh Tao-Hang it is said that "from the time of Fu-Hsi down to that of the Chou dynasty, in uninterrupted succession of dynasty after dynasty, his person appeared but with changed names."

We are unwise if we undervalue the myths and legends of any country and especially those of our own India. It is the fashion nowadays to accept readily the views of Western Orientalists on philology, chronology and even on philosophy. But the myths and legends of the Purāṇas are not a farrago of nonsense; they may sound like fairy-tales but they are not meaningless. One of the achievements we are hoping for on the part of the Swamis of the Order of Ramakrishna is to justify the value of myth and legend and of the folk-lore of prehistoric India. The Purāṇas await a

reverent study of their contents. But this is a digression; let us return to the *Tao Te Ching*.

In the *Gītā* we hear of the cycle of *adharma* followed by that of *Dharma*. When *adharma* flourishes one of the circles of evolution has reached its nadir; then Kṛishṇa comes to establish *Dharma*. Similarly, the *Tao Te Ching* refers to two ages—the Vulgar-Age and the Virtue-Age. These alternate. How does the Vulgar-Age arise?

“ When the Great *Tao* declined, benevolence and righteousness came into vogue, then appeared intelligence and shrewdness and then artifice and hypocrisy ” (Chapter XVIII).

When *Dharma* flourishes, men and women are righteous *spontaneously*; there is no necessity for preaching. When people forget to live in the Spirit, then Spiritual Wisdom has to be preached.

Those who begin to preach to the Vulgar-Age of *adharma* are the *jñānins* of old who out of compassion incarnate to bring the world to Duty and to start the Virtue-Age once again.

H. P. Blavatsky, following the old Eastern teaching, mentions two types of God-like beings and classifies Lao-Tzu with Kṛishṇa, Buddha and Jesus. Lao-Tzu started a minor cycle of the Virtue-Age in China, but only a few were truly benefited. Degradation set in and a few centuries later the people made Taoism a religion of superstitions. Belief flourished, practice was neglected and so Wisdom disappeared. But the records which were made of the teachings survived and among them the priceless *Tao Te Ching*. To know Śrī Kṛishṇa one must go to the *Gītā*; to know the pure mind and the enlightened heart of Lao-Tzu one must go to the *Tao Te Ching*. But to understand the *Gītā* so that we may hear the Song of Life and feel the elevation of inner peace and bliss we must saturate ourselves with the sound and colour of the *Gītā*; there must be some *sādhana* between ourselves and Śrī Kṛishṇa, and so also with Lao-Tzu. To the misfortune of our culture most of those who write and speak, who preach and sing, do so without any *sādhana*; it is a feature of this dark and hard Kali-Yuga. But as far as the *Tao Te Ching* is concerned people may be assured

of the rich reward which awaits them if they go reverently to the book and read it, even in translation, with the mind of the heart rather than with the eye of the brain. Lao-Tzu says of himself:—

“ Alas! the barrenness of the age has not yet reached its limit.

“ All men are radiant with happiness, as if enjoying a great feast, as if mounted on a tower in spring. I, alone, am still, and give as yet no sign of joy. I am like an infant which has not yet smiled, forlorn as one who has nowhere to lay his head. Other men have plenty, while I, alone, seem to have lost all. I am a man foolish in heart, dull and confused. Other men are full of light; I, alone, seem to be in darkness. Other men are alert; I, alone, am listless. I am unsettled as the ocean, drifting as though I had no stopping-place. All men have their usefulness; I, alone, am stupid and clownish. Lonely though I am, and unlike other men, yet I revere the Foster-Mother, Tao.

“ My words are very easy to understand, very easy to put into practice ; yet the world can neither understand nor practise them.

“ My words have a clue, my actions have an underlying principle. It is because men do not know the clue that they understand me not.

“ Those who know me are but few, and on that account my honour is the greater.

“ Thus the sage wears coarse garments, but carries a jewel in his bosom.”

The *milieu* in which Lao-Tzu taught was different from that in which the Divine Kṛishṇa gave his message. The symbols and metaphors used are different. Lao-Tzu's field of *Dharma* was not Kurukshetra. This, however, should not be allowed to mislead us. If the *milieu* was different, the *métier* was similar. Lao-Tzu taught the doctrine of sacrifice and surrender, through the purification of the senses, the control of the wandering mind, the practice of *yoga*, the development of the Inner Supreme Spirit, or *Tao*. Lao-Tzu's words and symbols were more akin to those of the Buddha, his contemporary, and of the Christ who followed some

500 years after than to those of Lord Kṛishṇa. The *Gītā* teaching in XVIII. 60—

“ Being bound by all past *karma* to thy natural duties, thou, O son of Kunti, wilt involuntarily do from necessity that which in thy folly thou wouldst not do.”

and again in III. 33—

“ But the wise man also seeketh for that which is homogeneous with his own nature. All creatures act according to their natures; what, then, will restraint effect?”

is reiterated in the *Tao Te Ching*. We might say that while the cry of the *Gītā* is “ Stand up and fight!” the refrain of the *Tao Te Ching* is “ Be spontaneous,” yet both hold out the ideal of the right performance of Duty because of *Īśvara*, of the Tao. The interrelation between *svadharma* and *svabhāva* comes out in numerous places in the *Tao Te Ching*, not in the martial eloquence of Kurukshetra but in paradoxical aphorisms.

But we must not linger over the atmosphere of the book; let us go to its contents.

We need not dwell on the metaphysics of the *Tao Te Ching*. Both the *Gītā* and the *Tao Te Ching* treat of applied philosophy in which practical and ethical teachings are to the fore and metaphysical propositions as such are not discussed. Yet these form a very natural background to the *Tao Te Ching*, just as a whole metaphysical philosophy is the background to the stirring and elevating speeches of Kṛishṇa to Arjuna.

Thus, Tao as the Causeless Cause, the Nameless Absolute, *Para-Brahman*, designated as Tien Tao, the Tao Transcendent, is spoken of, and its relation to *Īśvara*, *Ādi-Purusha*, *Saguṇa-Brahman*, is referred to. Ti Tao is the manifested, the immanent Tao, but it must not be taken in the sense of a Personal God, creator of all things. Only two extracts need be cited:—

The *Tao Te Ching* opens with a grand but compact description (I. 1-4):—

“ The Tao that can be spoken of is not the Changeless Tao. The Name that can be Named is not the Ineffable Name.

" The Nameless is the spring of Heaven and Earth. Named It is the Mother of all things.¹

" Always without desire we must be found,
If its deep mystery we would sound;
But if desire always within us be,
Its outer fringe is all that we shall see.

" These two, the Nameless and the Named One, are identical in essence. This is the Mystery—Darker than any Mystery, the Doorway whence issue all Secret Essences."

The second extract which deals more specifically with these two, *Nirguṇa*- and *Saguṇa-Brahman*, or *Para-Brahman* and *Īśvara*, is from the fourth chapter of the *Tao Te Ching* (Verses 1 to 3):—

" The Tao is empty; yet it may be drawn from and need not be filled. Without a Source It is the eternal progenitor of all things.

" In It all sharpness is blunted, all tangles untied, all glare tempered, all dust smoothed. It is like a deep pool that never dries.

" Who gave It birth? We cannot tell. But as a substanceless image It existed even before the Ancestor of all—*Tao* before *Ti*."

In the fortieth chapter we read that " though all creatures under heaven are the products of Being, Being itself is the product of Non-Being." The magnificent closing of the chapter on *Vibhūti-Yoga* may be compared to this:—

" I established this whole universe with a single portion of Myself and remain separate " (X. 42).

Tao, like *Kṛishṇa*, is omnipresent and immanent, and an especial aspect of It is in you and me and all men, and this aspect is referred to as *Jen Tao*, the *Tao* of Man. The cultivation of the *Tao* is the main purpose of existence:—

¹ The Feminine or Sakti aspect of Nature is much praised in the *Tao Te Ching*. " The Mother of all things " has just been mentioned. In Chapter VI we come across the expressions, "the Mystery of the Mother" or " the Female Mystery "—" the Doorway of the Mysterious Female is the base from which Heaven and Earth sprang."

" It is there within us all the while;
 Draw upon it as you will, it never runs dry."
(Chapter VI)

But its light is obscured by desires and the objects of sense.
 In the third chapter we read:—

" If the people never see such things as excite desires, their hearts will remain placid and undisturbed."

And again in the forty-sixth chapter:—

" There is no lure greater than the lure of ambition ;
 No disaster greater than discontent;
 No evil greater than the wish to be getting."

One more quotation and we have done with *kāma* which
 " rageth like fire and is never to be appeased " (III. 39).

Listen to this from the *Tao Te Ching* (Chapter XLIV):—

" Or fame or Life,
 Which do you hold more dear?
 Or life or wealth,
 To which would you adhere?
 Keep life and lose those other things;
 Keep them and lose your life:—which brings
 Sorrow and pain more near?

" Thus we may see,
 Who cleaves to fame
 Rejects what is more great;
 Who loves large stores
 Gives up the richest state.

" Who is content
 Need fear no shame.
 Who knows to stop
 Incurs no blame.
 From danger free
 Long live shall he."

Now the method by which *tanhā* (*trishṇā*), *kāma*, can be overcome is once again the same in the *Gītā* as in the *Tao Te Ching*. It is to rise above the pairs of opposites, and learn the technique

of actionless action—*Wu Wei*. The simple life is the spontaneous life: the Sage radiates forth the Tao “conveying lessons without words” as does the *Guru* under the Banyan Tree:—

“ Ah! the wonder of the Banyan Tree. There sits the *Guru-Deva*, a youth, and the disciples are elders; the teaching is silence, and still the disciples’ doubts are dispelled.”

As to the pairs of opposites:—

“ It is because every one under Heaven recognizes beauty as beauty, that the idea of ugliness exists.

And equally if every one recognized virtue as virtue, this would merely create fresh conceptions of wickedness.

For truly Being and Not-being grow out of one another; Difficult and easy complete one another.

Long and short test one another;

High and low determine one another.

The sounds of instrument and voice give harmony to one another.

Front and back give sequence to one another.

Therefore the Sage relies on actionless activity.”

This is actionless action, the *nishkāma-karma* of the *Gītā*. And how is one to master the technique and attain the state?

“ Give up thy life if thou wouldst live,” says *The Voice of the Silence*. “ To become full, be hollow,” says the *Tao Te Ching* (Chapter XXII), and again (Chapter VII):—

“ Heaven is eternal, the Earth everlasting.

How come they to be so? It is because they do not foster their own lives;

That is why they live so long.

Therefore the Sage

Puts himself in the background; but is always to the fore.

Remains outside; but is always there.

Is it not just because he does not strive for any personal end

That all his personal ends are fulfilled?”

Arjuna was the fighter, but Kṛishṇa was the Charioteer—putting Himself in the background He was to the fore—always

there. Here is a Chinese image of the Sage who has attained. Compare it with similar descriptions in the second and fourteenth chapters of the *Gītā*:—

“ Of old those that were the best officers of Court
 Had inner natures subtle, abstruse, mysterious, penetrating,
 Too deep to be understood.
 And because such men could not be understood
 I can but tell of them as they appeared to the world:
 Circumspect they seemed, like one who in winter crosses
 a stream,
 Watchful, as one who must meet danger on every side.
 Ceremonious, as one who pays a visit;
 Yet yielding, as ice when it begins to melt.
 Blank, as a piece of uncarved wood;
 Yet receptive as a hollow in the hills.
 Murky, as a troubled stream—
 Which of you can assume such murkiness, to become in
 the end still and clear?
 Which of you can make yourself inert, to become in the
 end full of life and stir?
 Those who possess this Tao do not try to fill themselves
 to the brim,
 And because they do not try to fill themselves to the brim
 They are like a garment that endures all wear and need
 never be renewed.”

Lao-Tzu did not teach the doctrine of inaction but the right performance of action. In the fourth chapter of the *Gītā* Kṛishṇa says (Verse 16):—

“ Even sages have been deluded as to what is action and what inaction ; therefore I shall explain to those what is action, by a knowledge of which thou shalt be liberated from evil.”

And in the following verses a masterly exposition is given. The meaning of sacrifice (*yajña*) and the value of different sacrifices are explained, and the sacrifice of wisdom (*jñāna-yajña*) is recommended. . The nature and meaning of every *karma* already

done or to be done or now being done are comprehended in and by Wisdom of the Spirit and the superb culmination is an exhortation—who does not know it?—(IV. 42):

“Wherefore, O son of Bharata, having cut asunder with the sword of spiritual knowledge this doubt which existeth in thy heart, engage in the performance of action. Arise!”

But turn to the *Tao Te Ching* and let us see the famous doctrine of *Wu Wei*: to be active with the activity of the Inner Life.

We can cull out and marshal teachings to show that *karma*, *bhakti*, *jñāna*, *dhyāna*, and *abhyāsa mārgas* are expounded in the *Tao Te Ching*. The tendency to differentiate and distinguish between these Paths is overdone. It is as erroneous to assert as some do that the *Gītā* advocates *Karma-mārga* as for others to say that it stresses the Path of Devotion. The Path is One; on it knowledge, action, devotion, practice, meditation, are all necessary. The *Tao Te Ching* takes it for granted that for the all-round development of man as a compound unit every division of his complex constitution must be exercised. Actionless Action is to be performed by the body, by the mind, by the heart. Says our *Gītā* (V. 11):—

“For the purification of the self actions must be performed by the senses (*indriyas*), by the body (*kāya*), by the mind (*manas*), by the heart (*buddhi*), but without attachment.” This is *Wu Wei*, one single process of development in which several ways or *mārgas* are used.

The great symbol of the process is Water. The doctrine of “Resist Not Evil,”—better expressed in its positive form of *Satyagraha*—is exquisitely described in Chapter LXXVIII:—

“Nothing under heaven is softer or more yielding than water; but when it attacks things hard and resistant there is not one of them that can prevail. For they can find no way of altering it. That the yielding conquers the resistant and the soft conquers the hard is a fact known by all men, yet utilized by none. Yet it is in reference to this that the Sage said ‘Only he who has accepted the dirt of the country can be lord of its soil-shrines;

only he who takes upon himself the evils of the country can become a king among those that dwell under heaven.' Straight words seem crooked."

But how to proceed? What method or technique to adopt? Action must be comprehended in Wisdom and therefore our attitude to knowledge and to action is the starting-point—not what we know, but our attitude to what we know ; not what we do but our attitude to how we act. And so the *Tao Te Ching* says (Chapter LXXI):—

" To know and yet recognize that we are ignorant is a high achievement. Not to know and yet to affect knowledge is a vicious disease. Only he who recognizes this disease as a disease can cure himself.

" The Sage's way of curing disease consists in making people recognize their disease."

Once we have developed the Right Attitude by perceiving that the fight is in the mind where actions are determined and created, we are ready for the next step. Says Chapter XLVIII:—

" Increase knowledge by learning from day to day.

" Diminish doings by practising *Tao* from day to day. Diminish again and again and arrive at doing nothing.

" At this point of non-action there is nothing that cannot be done.

" By this very inactivity, everything can be activated."

This condition is not attainable save and except through strenuous persevering exercise—*abhyāsa*.

The control of the mind so that it is not caught up in the muddy torrents of *kāma* or desire, the right use of the senses and organs through the performance of actions which are duties is the first step. Says Chapter XII:—

" The five colours confuse the eye,
The five sounds dull the ear,
The five tastes spoil the palate.
Excess of hunting and chasing
Makes minds go mad.

Products that are hard to get
 Impede their owner's movements.
 Therefore the Sage
 Considers the belly, not the eye.
 Truly, ' he rejects that but takes this.' "

The fivefold assemblage of *skandhas*, to use the Buddhist term, or the fivefold assemblage of *samskāras* which develop through the five *tattvas*—Earth, Water, Fire, Air and *Ākāśa*, are here implied—part of the lower nature—*aparā-prakṛiti*—of the seventh chapter of the *Gītā* where three other factors are added—*manas*, *buddhi* and *ahamkāra*.

But in controlling the lower nature not the path of extreme asceticism, but that of moderation, is advocated. You will note, however, that the observance of the Golden Mean must be with the motive of the inner will which expresses detachment, *vairāgya*, of the actor in reference to his actions. Action without caring for the fruits of actions—*nishkāma-karma*—is presented, as we have already seen in the quotation from Chapter II which deals with the Pairs of Opposites. Here is the Path of Moderation just as taught in the *Gītā* (VI. 16-17):—

" Stretch a bow to the very full,
 And you will wish you had stopped in time;
 Temper a sword-edge to its very sharpest,
 And you will find it soon grows dull.
 When bronze and jade fill your hall
 It can no longer be guarded.
 Wealth and place breed insolence
 That brings ruin in its train.
 When your work is done, then withdraw!
 Such is Heaven's Way."

The simple life and the Sage's Way are identical in the teachings of both the *Tao Te Ching* and the *Gītā*. But remember what has been said, that the *Tao Te Ching* is not spoken in martial eloquence, direct and compelling, but in paradoxes—here is the simple life described:—

" Banish wisdom, discard knowledge,
 And the people will be benefited a hundredfold.
 Banish human kindness, discard morality,
 And the people will be dutiful and compassionate.
 Banish skill, discard profit,
 And thieves and robbers will disappear.
 If when these three things are done they find life too plain
 and unadorned,
 Then let them have accessories;
 Give them Simplicity to look at, the Uncarved Block
 to hold,
 Give them selflessness and fewness of desires."

But these paradoxes present in a still more direct fashion the doctrine of Passive Resistance:—

" The best charioteers do not rush ahead ;
 The best fighters do not make displays of wrath.
 The greatest conqueror wins without joining issue;
 The best user of men acts as though he were their inferior.
 This is called the power that comes of not contending,
 Is called the capacity to use men,
 The secret of being mated to heaven, to what was of old."

This method is called the Sage's Way and it is beautifully described:—

" True words are not fine-sounding;
 Fine-sounding words are not true.
 The good man does not prove by argument;
 And he who proves by argument is not good.
 True wisdom is different from much learning;
 Much learning means little wisdom.
 The Sage has no need to hoard;
 When his own last scrap has been used up on behalf of
 others,
 Lo, he has more than before!
 When his own last scrap has been used up in giving to
 others,
 Lo, his stock is even greater than before!

For Heaven's way is to sharpen without cutting,
And the Sage's way is to act without striving."

Many of our Christian brothers, in their ignorance no doubt but ignorance which they could dispel from their minds by study of other scriptures, contend that the return of love for hatred was first taught by Jesus. This is not so. The doctrine of "Resist Not Evil," was taught not only by Lao-Tzu, but also by the Great Buddha six hundred years before the era of Jesus. With what better or more practical teaching can we close this rough outline study of these great books than with the words of Lao-Tzu and those of the Buddha which, however grand, are themselves but the echoes of their Originals taught by the Divine Immortals, the Dwellers on Mount Meru? Says Lao-Tzu:—

"To those who are good to me, I am good; and to those who are not good to me, I am also good;—and thus all get to be good. To those who are sincere with me, I am sincere; and to those who are not sincere with me, I am also sincere;—and thus all get to be sincere."

And the words of the Tathāgata:—

"To the man that causelessly injures me, I will return the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from him, the more good shall flow from me" (*Udānavarga*, XIV. 3).

And going back in time we have a similar injunction in the *Sāma-Veda* (*Āraṇyagāna*, *Arha-parva*, 2nd *Prapāṭhaka*).

SANKARĀCHĀRYA AND THOMAS AQUINAS

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Two thinkers, separated by a great distance of time and of space, have both uttered in their works so mighty a call to the intellect as the highest power of man, and have both so decisively acted upon the minds of their successors, that in spite of the most striking differences in the external conditions of their activity, we feel impelled to institute a comparison between them, should it

be only in order to pay once more the homage due to their genius. I will speak of Śaṅkarācārya and Thomas Aquinas. The VIII century in India and the XIII century in Europe belong to those epochs of history, when the human mind seemed to go on a new flight in striving after the Divine. On one side we see research and scrutiny touching the fundamental questions; on the other side we are struck with wonder before the highest conceptions that have ever illuminated mankind.

It is no more necessary to say that this time of blossom had been prepared from long ago and that it was a splendid result of hidden labours. Nevertheless, rarely more definite traces have been left of the ways the human intellect has stepped upon, rarely the delineation of the mental areas has been more clearly made; rarely also the mind of the mankind has been so deeply impressed and stimulated. We know little of the circumstances by which the intellectual priority has passed again from the hands of the Buddhists to those of the Brahmins in India of the period from the VII to the VIII century. We are much better informed about Europe. The discovery of the metaphysical treatises of Aristotle at the beginning of the XIII century caused a ferment in the intellectual world. As a result of that, the great undertaking to harmonize the catholic doctrines with the Aristotelian philosophy has been successfully carried by Thomas Aquinas.

Contrary to the scarcity and uncertainty of the data handed down to us concerning Śaṅkarācārya, we are provided with quite sure informations on the biography of St. Thomas. Moreover, we have for information many pictures, probably quite true portraits of the saint, because they repeat the same features. The memory of Thomas was still living a long time after his death, and in all probability there have existed contemporary drawings of him, able to serve the future artists. The oldest we know is the figure of the saint on a fresco of Tra Anglico in the Vatican. Some others, very characteristic because of the allegorical treatment of the subject, originated in that closing period of the middle ages, the XV century. So are the picture of Gozzoli in the Louvre and the altar in the church of Sta Catarina in Pisa. Much higher than both in respect of the artistic performance stands the paint-

ing of Zurbaran in the Museum of Berlin. We do not count the others. But the most interesting as a printed abridgement of biography are the pictures in Paris and in Pisa.

In the upper part of them we see Jesus Christ. "*Bene de me scripsisti, Thoma,*" says He on the picture of Paris. Rays of light proceed from His head (in the picture at Sta' Catarina) to Moses, St. Paul and the Kneeling Evangelists, and, pervading the holy teachers join again in the head of St. Thomas who stands between Aristotle and Plato.

Such is the origin of the knowledge for Aquinas, God Himself and His words contained in the Scriptures. Such an authority has been the Śruti—its expression contained in the Vedas—for Śaṅkara.

Four books of the *Summa contra Gentiles* can be seen on the picture of St. Thomas. If the Indians possessed an image of Śaṅkarācārya, they would probably put also upon his knees another kind of a *Summa contra Gentiles*—selected passages from his commentary, *Sārīraka-mīmāṃsā-bhāṣya*, where he condemns the opinions of the Lokāyatikas and of the Schools of Nyāya, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, and especially of the Buddhists. He saw in these last the most hardened heretics. Their errors, as he believed, were the greatest hindrance to the expansion of true knowledge. The stubbornness and the narrow-mindedness of the Mohammedans and the Jews were the obstacles to their comprehension of the true faith in the eyes of St. Thomas.

Both Śaṅkara and St. Thomas have been theologians in their starting point and in their aims. The philosophy should be for these aims only an implement. But the qualities of the minds of the two thinkers made a whole masterpiece with the simple tool of reasoning.

Aristotle and Plato summarize the principles which have guided St. Thomas in his activity. He maintains after them and tries to expound with the utmost clearness that man's distinctive function is reasoning. It secures the control of our passions and of our desires ; this control is the sole means to avoid mistakes. According to Śaṅkara reasoning alone can amend and correct the

false conclusions of our sensations. So intellect is the best part of us, and speculative wisdom the highest excellence. To attain to the wisdom a moral perfection is necessary (Upanishads; Śaṅkara; Aquinas). It enables us to feel happy and not disturbed in performing this highest function, viz. that of reasoning. The standpoint is clear and scarcely has been ever before so decidedly formulated. In the East it has originated from the speculative tendency of the Indian mind. In the West it started from Greece and became, thanks to St. Thomas, the training discipline for centuries.

Thomas was deeply acquainted with Aristotle's works. He persuaded one of his friends, a monk, to make for him a new and full translation of the Greek philosopher's works. Thus the text and some commentaries have been literally rendered and ready for the studies. Thomas knew his Plato much less; the generality of the schoolmen did not know the whole doctrine of this philosopher. The informations about him were rather gathered from St. Augustine, or from some Fathers of the Catholic Church, and finally from the Arabians. The figure of Plato on the side of St. Thomas has a mere symbolical meaning for indicating a close kinship of mind. Indeed, it is easy to recognize in the works of Thomas Aquinas the Platonic thesis that the universe may be conceived as the thoughts of a universal mind and that the plurality of things is the reflection of the plurality of ideas. Only these immutable unities have a real existence and deserve to be an object of meditation. The true knowledge consists in recognizing this highest unity; and that unity is the universal mind.

We see here that the Western idealism is not far from the standpoint of Śaṅkarācārya in his commentary on the Upanishads.

As Thomas Aquinas had been trained in Greek philosophy, and well-versed with the teachings of St. Augustine and other Catholic writers, so Śaṅkarācārya also had been indebted to his predecessors. But in India the names of the old teachers were mostly forgotten and only their theories, like the rivers in the ocean, got mixed and lost in the general formation of a higher level of the public mind. We know, nevertheless, that Gauḍapāda, presumably in the VII century, has formulated in his *Kārikās*

the whole doctrine of *māyā*. And we cannot deny that this doctrine had been evidently influenced by *Śūnyavāda* of the Buddhists, so violently fought against a century later by Śaṅkarāchārya!

Śaṅkara calls himself 'Śrīmad Govinda-bhagavat-pūjyapāda-śishya.' Thomas Aquinas, besides being indebted to the ancients had been the pupil of the famous master Albertus Magnus. The line of Indian teachers up from Govinda goes, as the tradition maintains it, back to the author of the *Brahma-Sūtras* and through him to the Upanishads and the Vedas. Albertus Magnus taught the doctrines of Latin Fathers and their comments on the Scriptures. To both Śaṅkara and Thomas the light came from a revealed truth. The fundamental influence to which the intellect of St. Thomas had submitted itself was the teaching of Christ and of the Bible; for Śaṅkara it was the Vedānta. Just as the Catholic painter from Pisa put in the hand of the saint a volume of the Sacred Scriptures opening with the words '*Veritatem meditabiturguttur meum . . .*' so also it would be proper, if the Indians had painted a portrait of the Achārya and put in his hand the Upanishads opening on the words '*Tattvamasī*.' None of them has discovered a new truth; they have meditated on the truth which had been given already to the men, and they helped them to understand it by calling reasoning to the aid, without basing this reasoning on any physical theory.

St. Thomas has set the boundaries between the area of the rational and that of the revealed or super-rational, and has established a distinction between the natural and the revealed theology. Śaṅkara also distinguishes *Śabda* or *Śruti*, i.e. the revelation represented by the Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas and Upanishads, from the *anumāna* or the inference through reasoning which is subordinate to the principal source of knowledge and is in conformity with it. One may think, Śaṅkara neglects reasoning. It would be erroneous. On the contrary, he gives the first place to reason, but we must beware that our mind cannot reach the Absolute.

The chief aim of Thomas Aquinas was to convince the intellect of the Mohammedans and the Jews. Since they, the

"Gentiles," did not recognize the authority of the Church, the only way of persuading them was to have recourse to reason, the natural human faculty, although it is quite insufficient for divine realization or experience. That imperfect reason is the *avidyā* of Śaṅkara. As our "reasoning" is always mixed with *avidyā*, there is nothing astonishing that *anumāna* ought to be subordinated to *śabda*. St. Thomas opposes the intellect to the will and sets the former on a higher level than the latter. For Śaṅkara all *kleśa*, product of the sentiment and will, is a very great obstacle on the path to Knowledge. Here, as in many other points, the Indian thinker goes farther than the European.

So also with nature. For the Catholics, the doctrine of Divine things was the possession of the Church; for the Indian, it was the possession of the Upanishads. But the European schoolman asked: Does the system of nature, when explored, show a Divine Being? The answer was in the affirmative. By the argument of the "first mover," of improvement of things, of their transformation, and of their impermanency, Thomas proved the existence of God. For Śaṅkara the observation of nature was rather an obstacle: his mind had not been trained by the study of the Greek philosophy. The natural phenomena according to Śaṅkara cannot prove or deny anything, because they are, themselves, not existing absolutely, but are a *mṛigatrishṇikā*, the mirage.

Nevertheless, despite all his idealism, Śaṅkara seems to be obliged to admit the existence of the external world; he, however, calls it illusional or rather relative reality. He cannot escape counting with some reality as substratum, of our sensations. He only pushes the doubt to its extreme limit—to denial. Aquinas, more realistic and more moderate, does stop on the half-way: our senses are imperfect, but they are, besides the reason, our sole implement of recognition. The direct observation, rejected by Śaṅkara for the benefit of reasoning, is for Thomas the chief base of speculation.

Astonishing as it seems to be, Śaṅkara is nearer to Aristotle than St. Thomas, in one point, viz. the problem of maintenance of the world in actuality. Śaṅkara ascribes it to the *māyā*-power

of Brahman, as Aristotle ascribes it to an ever-existing property. Thomas, according to the Scriptures, sees there God's will. Both are real for him: the movement of the world and the origin of it. For Sāṅkara only the origin is real, the Brahman; the movement is seeming, a mere illusion of our senses.

The creation *ex nihilo*, taught by the Church, has been taken by Thomas as necessary to reasoning. In summary, Sāṅkara explains the successive displaying and absorbing of the worlds as the simple and continual display of the magical potency of Brahman.

God's will is the cause of the creation—teach us the Church and Thomas Aquinas; that cause is the *māyā*-power acting without any aim—says Sāṅkara. But the display of *māyā* implies, at any rate for our understanding, something as an act of will on the part of the *māyāvin*. Otherwise we would stand before the dilemma—*māyā* is an attribute of Brahman and thus Brahman would have attributes; or *māyā* is Brahman itself considered from the point of view of *śṛiṣṭi*.

The chief and highest quality of man is reasoning, the aim of which is the attaining of knowledge which contains in itself all particular truths. Such a knowledge, according to Thomas and to Sāṅkara is the knowledge of God the Absolute, the only one perennial Being. But the understanding of the truth revealed by the Scriptures and by the Upanishads and attainment of true knowledge is above the human intellect. Why this weakness of our mind? From the primordial sin—answers Thomas; from our innate *avidyā*—answers Sāṅkara. *Avidyā* seems to be without beginning, like *māyā*, but a life of purity can enable us to get rid of *avidyā*; a life of purity helps us to overcome the lasting sin and sharpens our mind for grasping the truth, says Thomas. The difference between these two theses lies in their starting point. Thomas, as a realist on the one hand and as a faithful Catholic on the other, admits a real cause existing at one moment in the past. Sāṅkara does not admit such a moment; he moves above time as above the phenomena.

The human reason is deceptive according to Sāṅkara, because it is based on illusionary perceptions. The natural reason cannot

be deceptive, says Thomas, as it is the impression of the Divine in man; it is only insufficient and must be perfected. This latter conclusion is common to both thinkers.

There is a fundamental difference in the means of perfecting our reason. According to Aquinas (i.e. to the Church) an aid is given to man not only by his good works, but also by the sacraments and mostly from the personal assistance of the Saviour. Saṅkara leaves man without any aid from outside; he has to count upon himself. It is the striking feature of all Indian philosophy. Nevertheless the idea of the Indian sacrifice as magical power effecting its results in the human and the divine world approaches the conception of the sacrament.

The end of all things is God; the final bliss consists in the contemplation of Him, and to that eternal happiness we are directed again by God's will, says Thomas Aquinas. We are directing ourselves, according to Saṅkara.

Thomas does not neglect the data of the senses: every cognition begins with them. The intellect grasps the substance of worldly things, being inadequate to grasp the Divine Substance. By means of reasoning it can be only ascertained that God does exist—does exist as a pure act.

And that He is only One Reality, adds Saṅkara. Everything else is unreal, phenomenal, transient.

How is He, this God of Saṅkara and of the Upanishads? He cannot be defined as He has no attributes. The one answer to all questions about Him is 'no'—'*neti*.' We cannot grasp Him.

But Thomas arrives finally at the same conclusion. There are gradations of understanding according to the scale of beings and of the excellence of their intelligence. An angel knows God by natural knowledge, higher than all power of human reasoning. The Divine intelligence adequate to grasp the Divine substance surpasses every possibility of comparison. The intelligence of the angels and God alone can understand himself. We can remember the motto which Anquetil Du perron has put at the beginning of his translation of the Upanishads: *Quisquis Deum intellegit*,

Deusfit." A man who could grasp with his intellect the *Ātman* of the Upanishads and of Śaṅkara, the Absolute Self which is *Sachchidānanda* without qualities, devoid of shape, free of every limitation, beyond conditions of space and time, this man himself would be the pure *Chaitanya*—he would be Absolute. In that case no separate personality can exist. "That same soul, which exists in all bodies, if considered apart from the limiting adjuncts, is nothing else but the highest Self" (Commentary on the *Vedānta-Sūtras*, transl. by Thibaut, I. P. 161). The subject is one with the object.

Aquinas says also explicitly (*Contra Gentiles* i.xxx) that we can rather say what God is not (He is not like this, like that etc.); we cannot define nor know what He is (cf. *neti* of the Upanishads). But as a means to express our desire, and nothing more than our desire, to catch some knowledge of God and to tell our striving to approach the Unapproachable One we make use of the names which design the properties of the things we know; we speak of God by way of metaphor. This is the same as *adhyāsa*, explained by Śaṅkara—the apparent presentation of the attributes of one thing in another. But we err if we take these metaphors literally. On every page of his works St. Thomas makes distinction between the Divine and the human; he keeps a strong boundary. He never promises to man, in this life, a full understanding of hidden mysteries. The full intelligence is not accessible even for the angels, as the gods which Śaṅkara mentions don't approach the Absolute.

Aquinas maintains firmly the plurality and diverse categories of beings. Here, in this point is seated the chief opposition between the pluralistic system of the European thinker and the monistic philosophy of the Indian. If the essence of philosophic thought consists in proceeding from plurality to unity, one cannot go any farther than Śaṅkara.

Thomas, a realist and faithful Catholic, is more human in keeping to the personality of the creatures. He, however, knows that even the highest individuality is a weak reflection of the Divine Light. The soul in the theory of Aquinas seems to be parallel to the *jīva* of Śaṅkara hiding the divine qualities, such

as eternity, omniscience and omnipresence, in the individual in the same manner as fire is potentially hidden in the wood, because an absolute identity of substance does exist between cause and effect—*kāryakāraṇabheda*. Even before its production the effect is already existent in the cause. The individual *jīva* which only by knowledge can attain the deliverance and attain Brahman is Brahman itself.

Thomas sees a gulf between the potentiality and the act, between the cause and the effect, between the substance and the existence. In God alone they are one. Thus, man is no God, and that in spite of many divine possibilities in his nature.

It would be interesting to compare the chief points of two scholastics, Eastern and Western, as represented by the teachings of Śaṅkara and Thomas Aquinas. It can throw more light on the aims and the methods as on the conclusions stated by both.

The greatest hindrance on the way to knowledge is *avidyā* from which proceeds *adhyāsa* or false superimposition of attributes, says Śaṅkara.

It is the primordial sin which causes the weakness of human nature and the lack of the higher understanding, says Thomas.

Ruled by *avidyā* we are subjected to the *mṛigaṭṛishṇikā* or illusion, according to Śaṅkara.

We err, because of our weakness, and can avoid error only by the Divine help—according to Thomas.

Through *avidyā* we realize the *Nirguṇa-Brahman* as *Saguṇa* or bestowed with attributes (Śaṅkara).

In our weakness we cannot grasp God and are more or less satisfied with the metaphorical definitions of Him (Thomas).

For the everyday-life we have *Vyavahārārtha* and a *Vyāvahārika Brahman*—in our human life we have only human knowledge of God. But there exists another, deep and true, sense, *paramārtha* which grasps *Pāramārthika Brahman* (Śaṅkara).

The higher knowledge is possessed by angels; the Absolute,

unattainable for man, shall be attained in the heaven in the spiritual and complete union with God (Thomas).

Saṅkara maintains that the ways to knowledge are *tarka* (reasoning) and *anubhava* (introspection). Thomas holds that the saints attain knowledge by their highly spiritual life.

In both the systems the best preparation for seeking knowledge is the ethical conduct.

The world has its origin in *māyā*, the power of illusion of Brahman; there is, so to say, a passive creation, according to Saṅkara.

The world has been created by an active will of God. In the view of Thomas mere potentiality does not suffice for explaining the act.

The *Ātman* is impersonal, pure intellect ; in it after the final deliverance, we shall be lost in the All which is One and which is and has ever been our Self.

God is personal, not, however, in the human sense. Personal also are angels and men.

Saṅkara, following the Upanishads, and Aquinas, following the Scriptures, both admit the intermediates between the Divine and the human: they are the Rishis and saints or angels. But for Saṅkara, the mediator can only be necessary and possible between man and *Īśvara* or *Saguṇa-Brahman* realized by *jīva*, the individual soul. No need of mediator between the Self of man and the Universal Self, because they are one.

Both Saṅkara and Thomas Aquinas have been the first to proclaim the autonomy of reason and have created a complete and new philosophical system without having recourse to an authority other than reasoning. Starting from the sensible world as the basis—secure for Thomas, false for Saṅkara as conception but secure as something underlying it—they pass to the pure intellectualism which conducts them higher and higher. In order to attain the highest region unattainable through reasoning alone, the authority and a complete autonomy of revelation had to be proclaimed, and both the Indian and the European have not hesitated to do it. Thus the synthesis of the natural and the

supernatural order of things, of faith and reason has been made. As a result no real conflict can happen between reason and faith: their truth has its source in God. Each time when our reason seems to oppose its conclusions to the data of faith, our reason alone is at fault, because it cannot and does not grasp the truth.

In the details of their methods, Śaṅkara and Thomas Aquinas differ sometimes very strikingly. But the system nevertheless is solidly established and common to both. And that in spite of an apparent contrast in some fundamental principles. Śaṅkara means that there is no distinction between the potentiality and the act, especially as the latter is, philosophically speaking, non-existing. The Absolute changes not, and the act or acting is a changing of state. For Thomas, there is a real distinction between the act and the potentiality. Potentiality can never become the act unless reduced to the act by something which is already an act. This act-perfection is God.

Before the time of Śaṅkara, during the VIII century and perhaps even at an earlier date, as also before the time of St. Thomas, in the period between the XII and the XIII century special attempts had been made to synthesize human conceptions of God and of the world. But this task needed a perfect familiarity with all the problems, discussed by theology and philosophy, and a deep metaphysical sense.

Thomas Aquinas and Śaṅkarāchārya fortunately possessed these two supreme qualifications. One could set himself with enterprise to the task of the unification of the entire range of knowledge, and the other carry it to its utmost conclusions. In the work of Aquinas and that of Śaṅkara can be seen the beginning and the consummation of the same system.

CHAPTER VII

SECTION VIII

Religion and Current Problems

SOME OBSTACLES TO TOLERATION

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India has ever been the home of toleration and her ancient records are singularly free from those blots of religious persecution which disfigure the pages of history in many other lands. We have no means at our disposal to determine the exact way in which the Dravidians were pushed to the south by the advancing Aryans nor even how Buddhism disappeared from the land of its origin. There is indeed reference in the *Ṛig-Veda* to Indra's conquest and carnage in the land of the phallus-worshippers or epicures (*śiśnadevāḥ*); but the invocation to the same god to keep off the same people from the sacrifice shows that enmity between the Aryans and these people was more political than religious. The Aryan method of dealing with people professing other faiths and practising other rituals was to prohibit social intercourse with them—a method which has lasted down to recent times. Possibly in earlier times the difference between Aryan and other cultures (excluding the culture of Mahenjo Daro perhaps) was so great that towards the latter Aryan arrogance dictated an attitude of contempt and abhorrence. The Kolarians were, as a class, kept at a distance in spite of the fact that they slowly absorbed some elements of Aryan culture by imitation and the Aryans probably adopted partially their system of land-administration. Brāhmaṇism never forbade to others imitation of its own outward practices so long as the privilege of the sacerdotal class was not infringed. Possibly an inner and an outer circle of imitators were instituted early in deference to social needs just as in Judaism there was a distinction between the sojourners (*gêrim*) and the non-sojourners or outsiders in respect of the performance of Jewish rites. Possibly the earliest reference to this distinction is to be found in the statement that the sacrificial fire belongs to the five peoples (*pañchajanāḥ*), which, in the opinion of Aupamanyava (as quoted by Yāska), are the Brāhmaṇas, the Kshatriyas, the Vaiśyas, the

Sūdras and the Nishādas, and the sacred stream Sarasvatī is supposed to make these five peoples flourish. Possibly the attitude towards the last two fluctuated according to circumstances: but there can be no doubt that necessity left no option in the matter and a section had to be tolerated at home and in society and allowed some of the privileges of the higher classes. A large mass of the indigenous population was not admitted to the privileges of the higher castes, and although it is not likely that the untouchables varied in composition in different times and in different places according to historic reasons the distinction between the touchables and the untouchables persisted all through the centuries. It was not obligatory on all peoples to accept the socio-religious practices of Brāhmaṇism and a good many of the primitive tribes remained outside the pale of Hinduism; but those who imitated those practices or were permitted to be called Hindus had to submit to the restrictions imposed on lower classes as a price of their inclusion within the Hindu fold. Possibly the principle 'Lesser rights, lesser obligations' worked well for some time as the absorbed races were unwilling to give up all their primitive habits on admission into the Hindu fold and the higher castes did not insist upon the fulfilment of all the obligations of Brāhmaṇism in order to be so admitted—in fact, the religious law could not permit all to be equally treated in sacerdotal matters, not even the higher castes themselves.

This Hindu attitude towards the absorbed races well illustrates the difference between religious equality and religious toleration. These races were not placed on the same level with the Aryans as regards religious rights—in fact, it may be said that inequality among the Aryans themselves became more pronounced as time rolled on, and castes and sub-castes that were evolved in later times enjoyed unequal privileges of different kinds and degrees. Practices that were prohibited to one caste were permitted to another caste so much so that non-performance of appointed caste-duties was looked upon with disfavour, and attempts to follow the practices of higher castes were socially and politically punished. That, in spite of injunctions and oppressions, violations of caste rules did take place is evident from the fact that the intercastes

increased in number to such an extent that today their number is very great in Hindu society and they live with insurmountable barriers in between so far as matrimony is concerned. But when the castes did evolve, specific duties were assigned to them and it was never expected that all castes would have the same rules or enjoy the same social privileges. Where social constitution is not homogeneous and difference in status means difference in social and religious duties, a certain amount of toleration of lower cults is inevitable. So long as one lives within the framework of Hindu society and admits its social stratification and its caste duties, one cannot be molested for not falling in line with the higher castes or not abjuring altogether rites, ceremonies and occupations which are forbidden to the latter. Gradation of social components is bound to bring toleration in its train; for once a distinction between higher and lower is admitted, provision has to be made for varying the standard of secular and religious occupation of the different classes. We need not discuss just now whether society should be homogeneous or heterogeneous and whether divergence of occupations should necessarily lead to difference in social status; we need only note that the zeal for uniformity is likely to abate with a recognition of the fact that all are not equally privileged and cannot therefore be subjected to the same rules of discipline.

Complications arise when society is defied; much of the religious persecution in history is due to the fact that rebellion against social beliefs and practices disturbs social equanimity and complacency. Possibly, if belief had not affected practice social friction would have been much less: for society cares more for conformity to its own outward conduct and custom than for agreement with its creed and conviction. This is why even philosophical atheism was tolerated in India when those who professed it did not disturb the socio-religious practices of the community to which they belonged. People devoted to the same god may come to blows over the question of method of worship, not to talk of monotheists who worship a unitary divinity under different names. Social habits and religious practices act as dividing gulfs between communities even when they agree about the essentials of faith. As every faith is born in a particular environment, the historical

and social setting has a profound influence upon its constitution and expression—it carries the local and the contemporaneous with it and when it extends to other realms it comes into conflict with the local methods of worship even though there may be no radical difference between its own contents and those of the beliefs of these other realms. Of course, absolute identity is not possible, but where the essentials are untouched there might conceivably have been some workable formula of conduct for the converts of other lands in keeping with their past practices. No conquering creed would, however, permit this latitude lest there be a relapse into the old faith, and so not only the beliefs but also the outward acts must conform to the standard fixed by a faith in the land of its origin. Religions go by the doctrine that those who act similarly think similarly and that in order to wean a person effectively from his old allegiance a break with his old traditions must be established. The conversion ceremonies of each religion are designed with a view to making the acceptance of the new faith as impressive as possible and the civil law of every advanced state tries to adjust legal rights to the faiths of its citizens and guarantee freedom of worship with due regard to communal harmony and social peace. Those who are conversant with the history of persecution in Christian countries know to what length intolerance can go: the persecution of the Roman Catholics by Protestant states and the oppression of the Protestants in Roman Catholic countries, both culminating in burning of the dissenters at the stake, were looked upon as nothing extraordinary or reprehensible in Christian Europe although it is the religion of Christ that both Protestants and Roman Catholics professed to follow. The fission of a church over details of worship is not a rare phenomenon and it is not often that the opponents part in peace or remain non-violent in speech and action. When any religion claims not only that it embodies the whole truth but also that it alone is in possession of the only right method of contemplating and worshipping God, it becomes intolerant of other creeds and their modes of devotion. That all must conform to a single mode of worship and that people should be dragged into the mosque or chapel or temple to join a public

worship even though they are inclined to private contemplation betray an intolerant attitude of the social mind.

But far more serious than differences of practice are differences of belief. Credal dissimilarity may assume a multitude of forms, beginning with the difference between polytheism and monotheism and ending with differences in the contents of the various monotheistic faiths. There is also the fundamental distinction between believers and non-believers in supernatural existence, including within non-believers atheists, sceptics and agnostics. It is rather curious that while society is generally tolerant of the individual non-believer and lets him alone, it does not allow such non-believers to form groups and spread their doctrines actively within the community. As is natural, the status of the individual dissenter determines the social attitude: while an insignificant person would be ignored, a prominent personality is a potential danger to the community by virtue of his eminence and ability and so his anti-social tendencies of thought and action are more closely watched and crushed before they threaten the solidarity of social belief and cause a division in the ranks. Persecution begins as soon as the person attempts to spread his doctrine and it becomes intensified with the increase in the number of his following in the community. The social persecution of the prophet of a new religion and the political persecution of his followers by the orthodox party in power are not infrequent events in history. Religious belief is such a cementing principle of social unity that defection in any form is unwelcome to the majority. When to this is added the fear of losing profitable business, the priestly class is naturally alarmed and annoyed and sets the law in motion against the daring dissenter and his followers; their position and prestige in the community lend an additional authority to their words, and when they profess to speak in the name of their gods they inspire people with awe and prompt them to ready obedience.

At the root of all religious persecution lies the assumption that the dissenter is drifting away from truth; but this assumption is not made in cold intellect and with a detached attitude. A criticism of one's philosophical position leads one furiously to

think and to attempt a removal of contradictions ; but a flouting of one's religious conviction leads one to act violently so long as one does not calmly sit down to ponder over the matter and to understand the critic's standpoint. This is the way with all emotion-tinged ideas, namely, that we are unable to contemplate the opposite with equanimity ; there is latent somewhere a tendency to resist all contradiction and this tendency manifests itself more violently or less violently according to culture, tradition and environment. A wounded religious feeling may seek consolation in isolation and repose ; it may pity the critic's ignorance and forgive his insolence ; it may seek the path of persuasion to turn the critic into a convert ; but it may also inflame passions and rouse fury and ultimately lead to violent acts. When religion is not a mere personal attitude towards the unseen but a phenomenon of the crowd or social mind, it easily begets heat on being defied and the religious crowd or community degenerates into a fanatical mob and, like all mobs, ceases to tolerate opposition and wreaks its savage wrath on the offending individual or group. We are more intolerant as communities than as individuals and the less the number of free-thinkers and the more the number of blind followers the more well-knit is the social group and the more intolerant is its attitude towards dissent. This will explain why Roman Catholicism and Moham-medanism, in which religious leadership is more undisputed, if not absolute, are less tolerant than Protestantism and Hinduism. Besides, in the former two the infallibility of the Pope or the Prophet in matters spiritual invests each religious tenet with an unalterable verity. By their presuppositions these communities are precluded from conceding that truth might conceivably belong to other religious organizations also. In fact, every revelational religion has a tendency to be intolerant ; for once it is accepted that God has revealed the right way of faith and conduct to a particular community or individual it cannot at the same time be conceded that there might be other ways of being religious or moral, unless one admits at the same time that God can lay down a multitude of contradictory disciplines for the guidance of mankind at one and the same time or prescribe different ways of

spiritual life at different times. Intolerance indirectly implies, therefore, that God is one and unchanging.

Ultimately the problem of religious toleration would be found identical with the problem of man's capacity to know the supernatural unto perfection. The admission that man's knowledge of God and His ways—and in fact, of the nature of God Himself—is from the finite standpoint extremely limited will permit the further admission that other people may also possess spiritual truths to a greater or less extent and also that standpoints make difference in the nature and apprehension of ultimate verities. All truths are revealed through a finite medium and the assumption that a prophet can wholly lay aside his finitude and become the transparent medium of divine revelations in their fulness will be found on last analysis to be gratuitous. The growth of human knowledge in different fields of experience raises rather the suspicion that all truths, including religious truths, are infected with a latent subjectivity or relativity and that although there may be religious geniuses who see deeper into the nature of spiritual truths, yet they too cannot altogether get rid of their finitude or temperamental limitations and it is only by comparing the insights of different religious geniuses that we can get an approximate idea of the vastness of the religious field and the infinite vistas that religious inspiration opens up. The Indian way of admitting that there may be various paths (*mārgas*) for the realization of God—that while some are temperamentally fitted for the path of knowledge (*jñāna*) others can serve God better through action (*karma*) or devotion (*bhakti*) and, in fact, there are no limits to the number of ways through which God can be approached (*nāsaṃ muniryasya mātaṃ na bhinnam*) and that for the ordinary person the following of a tradition established by a religious genius suffices for the guidance of life—is based on this aspect of the matter, and the motto of the sage of Dakshineswar, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, that the paths are as various as the prescriptions is therefore not a new message but a reiteration of the age-long conviction of India that religion is not an objective revelation thrust uniformly on all souls alike irrespective of their equipment but an assimilation of spiritual truths according to

temperament, tradition and training. The Indian philosophers admitted, however, that man does not always know the potentialities of his own soul and the traditional path, accepted without criticism as authoritative in the early years of life, may turn out to be not suitable later on and spiritual training may also entitle a religious aspirant to discard a lower form of worship in favour of one higher as soon as he discovers that his soul is capable of higher things and that reflection on the mysteries of existence has exposed the defects and difficulties of uncritical thought and traditional modes of conduct. Religion is a function of education and endowment combined and so long as these two factors will vary the kind of religion that is accepted with the willing consent of the soul will also differ from individual to individual. What communal religion attempts to achieve is external uniformity of practice for social purposes—it does not obviate the necessity of a private religion for each individual in consonance with his intellectual, moral and spiritual development. The recognition of this truth is the best preparation for an attitude of tolerance. This increases the task of the missionary and the teacher for they will have to plod the patient way of illuminating dark souls and preparing these for the inevitable alteration of religious ideas and ideals in keeping with their spiritual progress. When that path is abandoned in favour of forcible conversion or when advantage is taken of economic distress or physical infirmity to convert a person of an alien faith, the community is extended no doubt, but so long as the necessary background of culture is wanting the new religion becomes identical with external conformity to social practice. Missionary activity is good when it is prompted by the belief that the religion preached is essential for the safety of all souls, for without a genuine interest in the spiritual well-being of one's fellowmen one would not care to labour in the field of religion. It is bad when the motive behind is to swell the ranks of one's own community for material gain. It is misguided when it does not attempt to understand and appreciate the truth that other religions embody and it is mischievous when it exploits ignorance and poverty and inflames passion and prejudice.

A careful examination of facts connected with religious

intolerance will disclose what great part social practices play in communal quarrel. Every religious organization develops peculiar rites and ceremonials and practises taboos of different kinds. The consecrated food of one religion is a veritable anathema in another and the music that is pleasing to God in one religion is a disturbance of the soul in another. Tastes and fashions owe their origin to historical and geographical reasons ; but when a religious community spreads to other times and places it insists on retaining the prescriptions of its original home. This denationalizes converts of other lands and creates divisions and hostile modes of behaviour among the people at large. Social intercourse becomes restricted because different religions insist on different outward symbols of the creed. When religion is understood mainly in terms of its outward expression in the minute details of daily life and when, not being natural and spontaneous expressions of the religious life, these vary from community to community, the effort to grasp the basic identity of the spiritual life of people professing different faiths is relaxed or abandoned altogether. When religion is regarded as a right which the adherent intends to exercise against the whole world and when any concession towards the unrestricted exercise of religion by people professing other faiths is looked upon as weakness, toleration bids fair to depart ; and when each religion claims the first right of way in expressing itself in the society, friction is bound to occur. The matter becomes complicated when any particular religion claims that irrespective of social exigencies its appointed exercises must be permitted at fixed hours, whatever might be the country and the composition of the population where it happens to be ; and when these exercises are supposed to be divinely prescribed, conflict is inevitable if more than one creed hold any such belief. It must be remembered that many a scripture has professed to see in the details of devotion the prescription of God and have refused to admit that the modes of worship are human devices albeit in consonance with regional facilities and national practices. What makes any religion conservative is the anxiety to put into the mouth of God what is merely temporary, national and regional. That in every religion there is a mixture of the universal and the peculiar, the eternal and the evanescent, can hardly be doubted,

and yet this simple admission would have avoided many conflicts and misunderstandings. But the claim of monopoly of spiritual truths alone adds zest to missionary work and makes a religion worthy of serious consideration by all ; hence the temptation to belittle other faiths and the tendency to extol one's own are two aspects of one and the same thing. Toleration means doubt and doubt means disbelief and disbelief is sure damnation—this is how the intolerant mind works.

But when once conflict does occur it is likely to leave after-maths that provide fresh sources of friction. No reformer gets an easy hearing, and when he does get together a following he is persecuted in different ways or social bans are placed on his supporters. If the original community still commands the allegiance of the majority, the reforming sect has a hard time of it ; and if the original religion claims divine inspiration for its scripture, then the matter becomes worse, for reform becomes identical with heresy and apostasy is synonymous with rebellion against God. History is replete with instances of opposition and persecution which reform movements have to feel at the hands of the conservative party in power. But the converse is also true, namely, that when the reformers gain the upper hand they wreak their vengeance on those who had at one time opposed them. Sects, like individuals, suffer from reminiscences and much of religious bitterness in the modern world is due to the fact that in some remote past the upholders of different religions had quarrelled and fought with one another. The Jew is despicable in Christian eyes because his forefather had crucified Christ and so his race must suffer unto eternity for the sins of his ancestors. Similarly, the Christian is hateful to the Jews because Christ had sown the seed of discord within the Jewish Church and brought a sect into being which preached the message of salvation to the hated Gentiles. The Mohammedan is an abomination to the Christian because he conquered the holy places of the latter and converted most of his churches into mosques. He is equally hated by the Hindus because he desecrated the temples of the latter when he conquered India and turned them into mosques in many

places. The Ahmadiya movement in so far as it admits the possibility of fresh inspiration even after the prophetic line had been closed by Mohammed is an object of contempt and hatred to the orthodox Mussulman. To resist innovation and to anathematize it when it succeeds are the ways in which communal displeasure expresses itself. The memory of old strifes rankles in the communal mind, and the different observances and social manners and customs serve to act as dividing gulfs between communities and cultures. Eclectic movements like Theosophy and synthetic cults like Sikhism only increase the number of creeds although their contribution to mutual understanding cannot be questioned. Profession of sympathy for the whole human race may not, however, always go with actual toleration—the persecution of the Christians under the Stoic emperors of Rome is an instance in point here. Periodical meetings of different religions on the same platform are likely to break down the barriers of ignorance and to convince the thinking portion that behind differences of custom and creed there is an abiding similarity of human attitude towards the unseen and that where differences are fundamental they have their origin in the diversities of human constitution and accidents of history and geography. But something more than an intellectual understanding of other faiths is necessary to bring about peace on earth and goodwill towards men. It is the practical recognition by all, both as individuals and as a community, that there is no statutory method of communing with God and that in religion what matters is not the content and method of worship but the cultivation of that cosmic sense which breaks down the insularities of personal and communal life. That in religion every soul is trying to fathom the mysteries of spiritual life and that the common endeavour of all truly religious men should be to make every one a better man or woman, are the mottos which the world needs most today to bring the kingdom of God nearer.

COMPLEXITY OF HINDU RELIGION (*DHARMA*)

PANDIT VISWANATH ATMARAM BORWANKER

Jhansi, U. P.

The condition of modern Hindu religion has become much deplorable. In olden times also numerous blows were aimed at Hindu religion, but it did not suffer much. Gautama Buddha was the first to assume a hostile attitude towards it. He rejected the authority of the Vedas and the exclusive claims of the Brahmins, abhorred bloody sacrifices and taught with insistence the doctrine of tender regard for every form of animal life ; but in course of time Hinduism absorbed much of Buddhist ideas and doctrines.

Jainism was like Buddhism in its attitude towards Hinduism. The Mohammedans also tried their best to exterminate Hinduism, but it proved itself a good match for Islam. This shows the wonderful assimilative power and superiority of Hinduism. And by the dint of that, it is still surviving. But its present condition is something different.

Day by day the religious problem for India is becoming more and more serious. Hinduism today is so complex that common people will surely be bewildered. It is because of its complexity, that nowadays different parties holding different views are seen among the Hindus. Those who belong to the first party, call themselves Sanātanists. They are of the opinion, that what is written in the Śruti and Smṛiti and Purāṇa is ever true, and we have no right to hold different opinions against the ordinances of the Śruti and Smṛiti.

The second party consists of revolutionists, who are against the Sanātanists. These people do not think there is any necessity of religion for social advance. Religion is luxury for them.

The third party is composed of those who are indifferent and say that whatever their efforts may be, they will not be of any use. What is to happen will happen. Consequently it is better for them to be indifferent. When God is pleased all will be right in no time.

Those who form the fourth party, are considerate people. They hold the opinion that as God has blessed them with intellect, they must use it. They are to modify their religion to suit the needs of the time ; to make their religion acceptable to all classes ; to make their religious system more popular and comprehensive ; to labour for the active propagation of Hinduism,; and lastly to stamp out the corruptions and points of confusion, that were introduced into it.

Religious unrest and rising of such parties are nothing but the outcome of the complexity of Hinduism. But the question that arises in a thoughtful mind is, why has Hindu religion become so complex? And in short its answer will be, because of egoism.

In the beginning Hinduism was not certainly so complex, but with the advance of time, the simple worship of the Vedic times began to be degenerated into a lifeless and mechanical system full of controversies.

One Rishi said one thing, while another said something different, and this difference of opinions is so much so, that even the definition of *Dharma* is not one. Vasishṭha has defined it in his *Dharma-sūtra* thus: "Actions, the fruit of which is unseen, are collectively called *Dharma*." Jaimini defined it by saying, " The act of following the Vedas and of being strictly according to the Vedic ordinances is called *Dharma*."

But Śrī Kṛishṇa has condemned both of them in these words, "Flowery speech is uttered by the foolish, rejoicing in the letter of the Vedas, O! Partha, saying: There is naught but this. With *karma* for self, with *svarga* for goal, they offer birth as the fruit of action, and prescribe many and various ceremonies for the attainment of pleasure and lordship. For them, who cling to pleasure and lordship, whose minds are captivated by such speech, is not designed this determinate reason, on contemplation steadily bent " (*Gītā*, Chap. ii. 43, 44, 45).

Further Śrī Kṛishṇa indirectly condemned the bewildering ideas that are contained in the Vedas or Śrutis, when Arjuna said in despondency—" By these caste-confusing misdeeds of the family slaughterers, the eternal caste *dharma* and family *dharma*

are abolished. Of the men whose family *dharma* is extinguished, O Janārdana, the abode is ever-lastingly in hell. Thus have we heard " (*Gitā* i. 43, 44). Śrī Kṛishṇa told him clearly that to depend too much on the Śruti would not do always, but it was thus in parliamentary language. " When *buddhi*, bewildered by the Śruti, shall stand immovable, fixed in contemplation, then shalt thou attain to *Yoga* " (ii. 53).

Not these only but there are many other confusing definitions of *Dharma*, and the peculiarity is, that all those definitions differ from one another in one respect or another.

In the *Taittiriya Upanishad* and the *Mahābhārata Dharma* has been defined quite differently. In the *Mahābhārata* while answering Yaksha, Dharmarāja said, "If a person will consult the Śruti and the Smṛiti to know what is *Dharma*, he will surely be confused, because one *smṛitikāra* says one thing, while another holds the opinion quite opposite to the first. Therefore the best *Dharma* is to follow the wise." The same conclusion is drawn in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*. It is written therein as the definition of *Dharma*, "Whatsoever a great man doeth, that we also should do, the standard he setteth up, by that we should go, because the path of *Dharma* is intricate." Again in the *Mahābhārata* Veda-Vyāsa holds the opinion that the rules and regulations which can hold, cherish and elevate the society are collectively called by one name *Dharma*.

In the *Rig-Veda Dharma* means sacrifice only, because in the *Purushasūkta* it is said, "Gods sacrificed their all, and revered those, who performed sacrifice, and the same deeds helped the further growth of the universe. He only, who is great, goeth to heaven where those gods live." It shows that sacrifice was the *Dharma* in the Rig-Vedic age, because to reach the supreme Goal is the fruit of good religious conduct and that supreme Goal can be reached by performing sacrifices.

After the Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas were written, and *Dharma* is defined therein as right conduct, but the definition that is given in *Vaiśeshika Darśana* is rather much confusing, because to say, "that by which prosperity can be achieved, and we can

enter into the nature of Almighty God is *Dharma*," is ambiguous when prosperity can be spiritual as well as material. Again a person is sure to be confused at this definition, as what those means are, is not clear.

According to Śrī Kṛishṇa *Dharma* means *varṇāśrama dharma* only, and in three *ślokas* he emphasized the same thing. In xviii. 47 of the *Gītā* he says, "Better is one's own *dharma*, though destitute of merits, than the well-executed *dharma* of another. He who doth the *karma* laid down by his own nature incurreth not sin."

When Arjuna sank down on the seat of the chariot, casting away his bow and arrow, Śrī Kṛishṇa exhorted him thus, "Further looking to thine own *dharma*, thou shouldst not tremble, for there is nothing more welcome to a Kshatriya than righteous war" (*Gītā*, ii. 37). While dealing with *Karma-Yoga* he said, "Better one's own *dharma*, though destitute of merit, than the *dharma* of another, well discharged. Better death in the discharge of one's own *dharma*, the *dharma* of another is full of danger" (*Gītā*, iii. 35).

Where there is so much difference of opinion about the proper definition of the term *Dharma* alone, it can be imagined easily, how complex the actual *Dharma* should be.

No doubt, Hindu *Dharma* was the simplest in its primary state, but that simplicity is now gone. However, we have to look into the causes which brought about the complexity into Hindu *Dharma*.

Hindu *Dharma* is comprehensive, but to say therefore it is complex is not justified, because it is as pure as it was in the Vedic times, and as simple as it could be. It may be asked, "If it is so, then why is so much confusion seen among the masses, why do religious disputes arise at all?"

The word *Dharma* has two meanings—one inclusive and the other exclusive. Whenever this word is used inclusively, it means religious system; while its exclusive use indicates Hindu religion. People generally take these two words for one, but there

is a marked difference between the two. Hindu religion is something different from Hinduism, and the ignorance of that difference is the cause of confusion. People in general do not see any difference between these two words, which have quite different meanings ; that is why they look upon Hindu *Dharma* as something complex.

The doctrines of Hindu philosophy are collectively called by one name "Hindu religion," whereas Hinduism means a religious system. The doctrines of Hindu philosophy are the same as they were, and will remain the same. On the basis of these doctrines various kinds of religious systems were based. Gautama Buddha built the structure of his religious system with equality and tender regard for animal life as its foundation. Mahāvīra founded his system on the doctrine of *ahimsā*.

The difficulty is, that no such distinction is made in our religious books, and it is we, who have realized the importance of differentiating these two words, because we see the people often committing the same mistake of regarding religion and religious system as one. No doubt a religious system is based on religion, but on a few of its doctrines, and not taking together all of those that comprise religion.

Firstly we discussed different definitions of *Dharma* and concluded thereby that where there is so much confusion in the definition of *Dharma*, the actual *Dharma* must be intricate. But it should be noted that those definitions have not defined the religion, but the religious systems that were prevalent at that time, and we shall deal with the complexity of Hindu religious system here.

So much is clear, that Hindu religion is different from Hinduism. The doctrines of Hindu religion can never be criticized. They are ever true, unaltered and unchangeable. In other words, they are perfect and complete in themselves, but Hinduism always has been subject to adaptation and changes, as it ought to be. Hinduism must always be commodious in order to adapt itself to the needs of the times. Because the scope of Hinduism is not limited to the collection of moral teaching, philosophical thoughts and doctrines only, that pave the path for salvation, but

more or less everything which is connected with a man's life falls within its scope.

As "*tem pora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis*" (times are changing and we with them), it is but natural for Hinduism to adapt itself to the needs of the times, in order to maintain, cherish and hold that changed constitution. It is to satisfy not only the spiritual cravings of the more ardent spirits, but the political, economical, physical, moral and educational cravings, and contribute to the peace and prosperity of the people. Hindu religion never asked you to have a crest or hair matted on your head, but it was Hinduism that laid down such rules according to the needs of the times.

But the complexity lies in the fact that Hindu religion and Hinduism are so closely connected that people often mistake one for the other, and call themselves orthodox Hindus, by condemning the adaptability. In our sacred works no such distinction is made, and prevalent customs, social rules and laws of different ages also are summed up as religion. But we should not be misguided by the word 'religion' only.

We should note that the religions of different ages were different. The religion of one age was not similar to that of another age. If somebody would follow the religious system, which was prevalent in the Vedic, Epic or Middle age, he is sure to be befooled by others, and he may even ruin himself. We shall see how Hinduism went on changing according to the needs of the times.

When for the first time, the Aryans found themselves in the plain of the Punjab, their religion was a form of nature worship, in which, the powers of heavens, the firmament and the earth were deified. Thus Indra was the god of thunder, Agni of fire and so forth. The gods are represented as great and powerful, disposed to do good to their worshippers, and engaged in unceasing conflict with the powers of evil. There is no indication of image-worship in the Rig-Vedic times. Gods were worshipped by means of sacrifices and prayers. The religion was not monotheistic, but there were passages in the hymns of the *Rig-Veda*, which

indicate that the unity of the Godhead was realized by the Indo-Aryans of the R̥ig-Vedic age.

This religion was in vogue in the R̥ig-Vedic age, but the religious conditions as reflected in the *Yajur-Veda* differ widely from those of the R̥ig-Vedic period. The old nature worship has been thrown into the background. Its place has been taken by a mechanical form of religion based on a complicated system of elaborate ceremonies requiring the services of highly skilled priests. That condition obtained up to the Epic period, because in the *Mahābhārata* we find Yudhishtira saying that the path of *Dharma* is much intricate. Again, we find that the doctrine of '*Ahimsā*' or non-injury to living creatures had gained wide currency and even got the better of the Vedic practice of animal sacrifice. The simple nature worship of the Vedic age had been to a great extent superseded by the cult of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. The Vedic deities had been relegated to a subordinate position, while many new gods and goddesses, unknown to the Veda, had arisen.

Varṇāshrama Dharma was the religion of that age ; now if somebody sticks to that religion, I doubt if it can prove him much better, because that religion was for that age only.

Although the doctrines upon which the building of that religion was raised will remain as our ground, the building itself will have another shape according to the fashion of the day. One asks to follow the religious system of the Vedic age, another of the Epic age, a third of the Middle age, and so forth. But they are not exactly right, and in a way they prove themselves as if wanting in something. Because of this, our Hindu religion (because people in general understand this term better, otherwise according to me it will be religious system) has become complex.

Secondly higher caste Hindus, who are responsible for the re-organization of the Hindu religious system, knowingly or unknowingly hold the doctrines that are contrary to the doctrines of Hindu religion. These doctrines were interpolated by the Brahmins of the Middle Age to maintain their position in the society, but on the basis of those doctrines, if we will construct our religious system, it will naturally prove dangerous.

From the Śruti and Smṛiti we gather such interpolated doctrines, which are quite against the doctrines of equality and social justice, dictated in Hindu religion.

The Brahmins had exclusive claims and supreme authority in the Middle Age. They enjoyed and abused the advantages of the highest position in the Hindu society. But the time came, when they appeared to lose their exclusive claims and supreme authority upon the masses. Tides of revolution came one after another continuously, which frightened them. But they were not willing to see the people of lower caste mixing with them on the basis of humanity and thereby of equality. The so-called priestly class had formed a kind of religious aristocracy, which it wanted to retain for all time to come.

They knew very well the hold of the religious books on the masses, so they interpolated such things in the *Smṛiti* and other religious books, by which the people of the lower order could be kept in the same condition. In those days religious books were not available for all. To the greatest extent, only the Brahmins had those books, and they were the only masters of learning, consequently their policy of interpolating succeeded in carrying out their aim completely.

If anybody would have taken pains to find out the validity of what the Brahmins were teaching and opposed them, the people of lower status would have seen better days much before, and social injustice would have disappeared from Hinduism even before the twentieth century. But the difficulty was, that no one except the Brahmins could understand the Vedas. It was the condition since the Rajput period. It was the whole and sole cause, why the Hindu priests dared to interpolate even the contrary of Vedic dictates. They knew well that the low-caste people would surely question their supreme authority, if they would be rich and educated. It was better for them, if the lower caste people could be kept in abject poverty and ignorance, lest they think of questioning their unquestioned supremacy. As a consequence certain *ślokas* were interpolated in *Manu-Smṛiti*, the then authority on Hindu religion.

One of the *ślokas* meant, " Let not a person of lower status be rich, denude him of his wealth even by force, because he will trouble the Brahmins, the soul of religion, on being rich " (*Manu-Smṛiti*, ix. 129).

The wonder is, that this *śloka* is quite opposed to the teachings of the Veda. The Vedas say, "I (God) am not partial to a servant or master. None of these should plunder one another for wealth" (*Atharva-Veda* v. 3.11). "Be assiduous and try to live long" (*Yajur-Veda*, iv. 1).

The education of low caste people would have worked like poison to lessen the prestige of the Brahmins. So they inserted such *ślokas* which restricted education to higher class Hindus only. But the great wonder is, that whenever they would be asked the ground on which those orders should be obeyed, they would point towards the Vedas. Be sure, that such narrow-sightedness can never be seen in the Vedas, because they advise, " O, people, be united (earn together, go on a journey together, and gain knowledge together), speak in good wise, culture your *manas*, and worship that God of gods, who is worthy of worship " (*Rig-Veda*, viii. 8.49). The Vedas cannot be imagined even to hold such narrow-sighted views.

So far we have dealt with the causes which introduced intricacy into Hindu *Dharma*, and it is obvious why the hold of Hinduism on the masses is not satisfactory. If anybody would go through Hindu *Dharma* considerably, he would find the germs of universal religion in it, but to carry strong conviction to the common people, it is necessary to remove the disabilities that have been introduced. This complexity of religious system has the effect of diminishing popular respect for Hinduism. A committee is needed now, which will try to stamp out all such interpolations and controversies, together with the separation of essentials from non-essentials, that will revivify Hinduism and satisfy the spiritual as well as material desires of the masses by offering them a religious law easy to understand and accessible to all, free from elaborate and costly ceremonial, raising the social status of the lower orders, giving them their spiritual freedom and making the life of the whole community healthier and happier.

PROFESSION AND REALIZATION
AND
PATH AND NO PATH

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When more than fifty years ago I came to Calcutta in the eighties of the last century to study in a college, the saint Sri Ramakrishna was still living and it was still possible to see him and hear his inspiring words from his own lips. But I was never so blessed as to come into contact with him. So I cannot say anything about him from direct personal knowledge. Nor am I qualified to discourse on any theological, philosophical or scriptural subject. But as my name has been included among the speakers this evening, I am constrained to say something. With great diffidence I propose to place before you briefly the result of self-examination caused by Sri Ramakrishna's teaching, "*yata mat tata path.*" This saying of his has been variously translated, the meaning being, "As many faiths, doctrines, opinions or views, so many paths" to the goal of *moksha*, emancipation, liberation, salvation, God-vision or Self-realization.

As I never had the privilege to learn the exact interpretation of this teaching from him or from any of his direct disciples, I shall refrain from any exposition of it.

As the Supreme Spirit is infinite, and His truth is infinite, it is obvious that no man can thoroughly know Him and comprehend Him. There are countless aspects of Him and His truth, and, therefore, countless approaches, too, to Him and His truth. These are contained, though not exhaustively, in the scriptures of the various religions of the world and the sayings of its saints, sages, seers and prophets. The reference in Sri Ramakrishna's teaching, "*yata mat tata path,*" is to these. So the discovery of the paths implies serious study, meditation and spiritual discipline. Of course, if a man is himself an earnest *sādhaka*, he may also himself discover a path to the goal in the light vouchsafed to him

in response to his strenuous spiritual quest. Such quest also implies spiritual endeavour and discipline.

But if one takes the Paramahansa's words light-heartedly, as many of us unhappily are apt to do, such light-heartedness must involve great moral and spiritual danger. Many of us appear to think that, as in the opinion of the Paramahansa all religions are true, it is enough for a man's salvation to be merely born a Hindu, a Jaina, a Buddhist, a Zoroastrian, a Jew, a Confucian, a Taoist, a Shintoist, a Christian, a Mussulman, a Sikh, a Brahmo, a Bahai or an Arya-Samajist, or to be born a member of some other more recent religious community and simply profess to be one, to reach the goal of *moksha*, salvation or liberation. If that were so, why did even Sri Ramakrishna himself, blessed as he was from childhood with such a highly spiritual nature, go through such *sādhana* and put himself to such severe self-discipline? It may be said indeed that, as he was born a Hindu but wanted to realize in full the truth of Christianity, Islam and some other faiths, it was necessary for him to undergo the requisite self-imposed discipline. But almost all the austerities he underwent and the very difficult courses of *sādhana* which he went through were meant for the perfect realization of the ideal of Hinduism itself in which he was born. Pandit Sivanath Sastri, an *āchārya* or minister of the Brahmo Samaj, who knew and loved and revered him, has related in his work, *Men I have Seen*, some of the Paramahansa's "extraordinary penances and austerities" by which, in the Pandit's opinion, the saint "had attained a state of perfection the like of which was seldom seen." The Pandit has also written of him: "The impression left in my mind, by intercourse with him, was, that I had seldom come across any other man in whom the hunger and thirst for spiritual life was so great and who had gone through so many privations and sufferings for the practice of religion. Secondly, I was convinced that he was no longer a *sādhaka* or a devotee under exercise, but was a *siddha purusha* or one who had attained direct vision of spiritual truth."

The example of Sri Ramakrishna shows that it is not enough to be born in any religious community and to pay lip homage to

its faith. It is necessary to realize its ideal or ideals by external and internal discipline, and also to realize the ideals of other religions by needful *sādhana*—though for the generality of men it is not possible to do what he did. Therefore his saying, “*yata mat tata path*,” “as many faiths or opinions, so many paths” to the goal, was not meant to produce in us easy-going and smug self-satisfaction, the mother of intellectual and spiritual indolence and indifference. Whether one is a householder or a *sannyāsin*, one must undergo self-discipline.

Every freak of fancy, every aberration of the intellect and every perversion of some sacred doctrine is not entitled to the dignity of the name of “*mat*” in the sense of faith. Readers of the ennobling life-story of Sri Ramakrishna’s helpmate, the Mother Sri Saradamani Devi, know the incident of her undertaking one of her two days’ journeys on foot from her home at Jayarambati to Dakshineswar to meet her husband and, in its course, of her meeting a robber in the midst of an extensive lone-some tract of land where there was a “shrine” where, the story goes, murderous robbers used to offer human sacrifice and go forth in search of victims to plunder and slay. The robber and his wife came under the influence of the Mother and the Saint, ceased to be what they were before, and were spiritually re-born. We may take it that the erstwhile robber and his wife did not deceive themselves by thinking that the cult of human sacrifice and pillage was also a “faith” showing “a path” to the goal, though it was followed in all countries in some period of their history or other and is still practised on a large scale by civilized races in the form of aggressive warfare and prayers for success therein.

This is an extreme example. But I venture to think that many of the opinions by which we worldly men often support our conduct in some religious and other matters do not deserve to be called “faiths” indicating paths to the goal of Realization of the Self.

THE ESSENTIAL UNITY OF ALL RELIGIONS

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There has been, there is, there will be, always, only one problem besetting Humanity—the problem of Bread. How to provide a sufficiency of healthy wholesome Bread to each and every human being? “Give us this day, O Lord! our daily Bread!”; but Bread Spiritual as well as bread material; for men do not, cannot, will not live by material bread alone. The hunger of the body is satisfied by material bread. But the far more poignant hunger of the heart, the hunger of the soul, can be assuaged only by the Bread of Life Divine, by assurance of the life beyond this life, and a life happier than is possible on this sphere of sorrows.

While we are painless, while we are thoughtless, while we have not stood helpless, despairing, face to face with agony and death, the agony and death of loved ones even more than our own—so long bread material suffices. “But when anguish wrings the brow”, when we know helpless hopeless misery and utter weakness, then are we perforce driven to seek out, and seek refuge in, and pray for hope and help from, that Ultimate Mystery which has created and which runs the Universe, from infinitesimal atom to infinite sidereal system, all equally; which is tirelessly at work in the heart of insect, bird and beast, and man and angel, all alike; and which is ever calling out to us, “Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give ye rest,” the rest which comes only with the finding and the tasting of the Bread Spiritual.

And the marvel is that they who run after only the bread material do not find it at all, or if they find it, find that it tastes bitter and is unwholesome, nay, turns to ashes in the mouth; whereas those who seek for and find the Bread Spiritual, find the other bread also, easily, in abundance, and in sweet and wholesome condition. “Achieve righteousness, achieve the kingdom

of heaven, first, and all things else shall be added unto you." And, on the other hand, "What shall it profit ye, if ye gain the whole world, but lose your own soul."

*Dharmādarthaścha Kāmaścha,
Sa kimartham na sevyate. (Mahābhārata)*

"From Dharma come both wealth and just Sense-Joys ;
Why strive ye not then for that Righteousness!"

*Sarveshāmāpi chaiteśhām
Ātmajñānam param smṛitam,
Tadhyagryam sarvavidyānām,
Prāpyate hyamṛitam tataḥ. (Manu)*

"Of all the gains that duteous conduct brings,
The best, the greatest, is the gain of Self ;
Of all true knowings 'tis most deep and True ;
The soul wins back thereby its deathlessness.

"Self-knowledge is the only pearl
In the Sea of Life ;
Like whirlpools round our-Self we whirl
In incessant strife." (Sūfi Hāfiz)

"Who knows his Self knows God." (*Qurān*)

Ye are the living temples of God. (Bible)

The commentary on these very simple, yet most profound, ever-repeated teachings of the Great Lovers of Mankind, is written by the "inveterately convolved" and complicated modern Western civilization. The mighty Titans of the ancient Indian and Grecian myths, reborn in the wonderful European and American countries, have conquered anew the gods of the earth, the ocean, the air, the thunder and lightning ; they have again enslaved, and chained to their chariots, and put to menial service in their homes, Kubera and Varuṇa and Vāyu and Indra himself ; they fly in the air, and rush beneath the oceans, and sweep along the earth, and create heat and light and wind and water at will, by touching buttons with their fingers. But they have

not conquered themselves, their lower selves, their base and evil natures ; they have not achieved the Vision of God, their own True Universal Self, their Highest Nature ; and, therefore, Europe, and, because of Europe, the rest of the human world also, has become one vast mad-house, full of maniacs, occupying the highest places of power in every country, and filled with the frenzies and manias that are identical with extreme excess of the cardinal sins, proclaimed as such by every great religion, the sins that are the true devils, the real and only great enemies of mankind, Lust and Hate, Greed and mutual Fear, Pride and Jealousy ; the sins which, by excess, in the individual, cause eroto-mania and cido-mania, avaritio-mania and phobo-mania, ego-mania and zelo-mania, and, in the mass, give rise to sensualism and militarism, capitalism and armamental terrorism, imperialism and diplomatism.

Kāma esha, Krodha esha . . .

Viddhyenamiha vairiṇam. (Gītā)

“ Hatred and Lust are the two inner foes,
That twist man’s eyes and make his vision false
And from the Straight Path lead his soul astray.”

(Maulānā Rūm)

Alas and alas! the gods have been conquered anew, with weapons of hate, by, and made unwilling slaves to, the Beast in Man ; they have not been conquered, with the beauty of Love, by, and not made willing and eager servants to, the God in Man. And therefore are all the Nations terribly unhappy, all in perpetual fear of Armageddon, all talking of disarmament, all saying that madness lies behind the race in armament, yet all running that race, compelled by the doom laid upon them by the Satan to whom they have sold their souls, in return for money and power and sensuous pleasure.

What is the sole and single cause of all this frightful state of things? It is that the League of Nations is not what it ought to be, is not primarily a League of All Religions, for the supply of the Bread Spiritual to all Mankind, whence would flow unflinching the supply of the bread material also to all, by one world-

wide loving and beneficent Organization for all-fostering all-nourishing Peace, instead of the many present frantic hateful maleficent nation-wide Organizations for internecine all-destroying War.

Neglect of the Spirit, the One True God, the *Viśvātma*, *Rūh-ul-kul*, Oversoul, *Anima Mundi*, the Total Mind, the Universal Self of All, Who lives and moves and has His Being in all things, and in Whom all things live and move and have their being, the One Supreme Principle of all Life and Consciousness and Sub-and-Supra-Consciousness (misalled *Un*-consciousness by the new Western schools of Psycho-analysts, Analytic psychologists, and Individual psychologists)—neglect of this One most indefeasible Fact of all facts, and excessive worship of Matter, and of Matter's entourage of Mammon, Moloch, and Mephistos, of Comus, Momus, and Priapus—Matter, very useful when kept in due restraint as obedient servant, wholly destructive and despotic tyrant when raised to the status of master and placed on the throne of Spirit, the True God—such is the one sole simple secret of the present misery of Mankind.

"But God fulfils himself in many ways," "out of evil cometh good ;" "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." (*Bible*)

*Yasyānugrahamichchhāmi
tasya sarvaṃ harāmyaham. (Bhāgavata)*

Out of forests devastated by fire, a greener growth shall spring, soon or late. If the Titans, the fallen Archangels, the Daityas, the Asuras, prevail now, the turn of the Devas, the pure Archangels, the gods, the Christs, will come again, and the True God will again be enthroned in the heart of Man, and spread the Peace that passeth understanding, and Love Universal, and Blissful Happiness, through all his being.

Because the gods and titans are always running their eternal race, and striving against each other incessantly, to keep the Wheel of Ambivalent Dual Polar Life revolving in all ways, and neither can ever wholly destroy the other, therefore, out of the very heart of Greed and Hate, Fear and Distrust, Lust and War, springs ever newly, and in fresh form, the sprout of such great movements of

the Divine Spirit in Man as the World-Fellowship of Faiths, and the Parliament of Religions; and the Great Cry of Motherhood, the Holy of Holies, the Holy Ghost, resounds throughout the human world, that the children for whom the mothers have travailed, in every country, in every race, may not be poured into the horrid dragon-jaws of Moloch, because of the madness of a few men, who, in their megalomania, think they are twirling the universe round their fingers, but who are, in reality, only the puppets and catspaws of Satan.

The human being is not a body only; he is also a soul. He is not Matter only; he is also Spirit. God's Nature and Nature's God, both meet in their child, Man. *Purusha* and *Prakṛiti* unite in him, as "Thought and Sound unite in spoken language."

Nāma-rūpe Bhagavatī, pratyayaḥ Puruṣaḥ paraḥ.

(*Bhāgavata*)

"Nature is Name-and-Form; the Thought behind,
Suspiring in that Name-and-Form, is God."

"I am none else than Thou, and thou than I,
I am Thy Body and Thou art My Soul;
Let no one say hereafter that I am
Other than Thou or Thou other than I." (*Suji Hymn*)

"The body is the soul made visible."

"We all are parts of One Stupendous Whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the Soul."

Because man is both matter and mind, both body and soul, because he is body in soul and soul in body, therefore he inevitably craves both life here and life hereafter, that life beyond this life which alone makes life here worth living at all, the assurance of which alone can sweeten the bitternesses of this life.

Therefore the holy Messiah prays, in the *Bible*, "Give us this day, O Lord! our daily bread," Bread Spiritual as well as bread material; and may "Thy will be done on earth," in the realm of the bread material, "as it is in heaven," in the realm of the Bread Spiritual; for so only can there be, shall there be, a sufficiency of bread for all.

The holy Prophet prays, in the *Qurān*,

“ O God of all!

Bestow on us all blessings in this world,

As also in the other future world,

And save us from the fires of sin and hell,

From which thy blessings, and naught else, can save.”

And the holy Rishi says, in the *Vedopāṅga Sūtras*:

Yato’bhyudaya-niḥśreyasa-siddhiḥ sa Dharmah.

(*Vaiśeshika-Sūtra*)

“That which bringeth happiness here as well as happiness hereafter, that is true Religion, that is true Right-and-Duty, that is true Law.”

And what is the quintessence of True Religion—the quintessence in which there are distilled into one all-embracing thought and sentence, the *Jñāna-kāṇḍa*, the *Bhakti-kāṇḍa*, and the *Karma-kāṇḍa* of *Vaidika Dharma*; the *Haqīqat*, the *Tariqat*, and the *Shariat* of Islam; the Gnosticism, the Mysticism, and the Energism and Pious Works of Christianity; the *Samyak-jñāna*, *Samyak-darśana*, and *Samyak-chāritra* of Jainism; the *Samyak-dṛishṭi*, *Samyak-saṅkalpa*, and *Samyak-vyāyāna* of Buddhism; the *Hummata*, *Hukhta*, and *Hu-varshṭa* of Iranian religion; the Right Thought, Right Desire, and Right Action, of all religions?

Listen to the quintessence, in the words of the Great Lovers of Mankind themselves, the saintly sages and seers, the messengers of the Divine, the sons of God, the prophets, the messiahs, the *avatāras* and *rishis*, the *nabis* and *rasūls*, the *insān-ul-kāmil*, *mazhar-i-atamm*, *pūrṇa-purushas*, ‘perfected ones.’

The Prophet Mohammed says:

“ Noblest religion this—that thou should like,

For others what thou likest for thyself,

And feel the pain of others as thine own.”

The Christ Jesus says,

“ Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; this is the whole of the law and the prophets.”

When a disciple asked him, "Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all one's life?" the great Chinese Master Confucius said: "Reciprocity is the word: Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself."

Buddha's single word is "*samānātmata*," "same-as-yourself."

Kṛishṇa's word is *Ātmaupamyena* "

*Ātmaupamyena sarvatra
samam paśyati yō'rjuna!
Sukham vā yadi vā duḥkham,
sa yogi paramo mataḥ. (Gītā)*

"He who can see and feel, same as his own,
The joys and sorrows of all, everywhere,
Who sees and feels all others as him-Self,
He is the highest 'yogi,' 'joined' to all."

The Prophet Zoroaster says:

"Hold that as good and proper for yourself
Which you hold good and proper for all else."

The Primal Patriarch and great Law-giver Manu says:

*Sarvabhūteshu chātmānam,
Sarvabhūtāni chātmāni,
Samam paśyan Ātma-yājī,
Svārājyamadhigachchati.*

"Who sees all living beings in him-Self,
And sees him-Self in all the things that live,
And makes of all his acts, of all his life,
One constant sacrifice of his small self
Unto the service of that Self of All,
He wins Self-rule in this and in all worlds."

And, in this Manu but repeats the *Vēda*, which has said:

*Yastu sarvāṇi bhūtāni
Ātmanyevānupaśyati,*

*Sarvabhūteshu chātmānam,
Tato na vichikitsate,
Tato na vijugupsate. (Īśa Up.)*

And the Brahmarshi Vyāsa says:—

*Śrūyatām dharmasarvasvam,
Śrutvā chaivāvadhāryatām,
Ātmanaḥ pratikūlāni
pareshūm na samācharet,
Yad yad Ātmani chechchheta
tat parasyaāpi chintayet.*

(Mahābhārata, Śānti-parva)

“ Do not to others what ye do not wish
Done to yourself ; and wish for others too
What ye desire and long for yourself
—This is the whole of *Dharma*, heed it well.”

Dear Sisters and Brothers, heed it well; do not deceive yourselves, and be not deceived by any others, professing to be priests of any religion, who may tell you, that any one religion is true and all others false, or even that religions differ. The great Founders of Religions themselves all say that they are only re-proclaimers of eternal truths, and say nothing new. The Prophet Mohammed says: “ God hath sent Teachers to all races; and what I am teaching you has all been taught by the preceding prophets.” Jesus says: “ I come not to destroy ” any teachings of the older prophets, “ but only to fulfil ” and complete what they have said. In the scriptures of the *Sanātana Dharma*, the eternity of the basic truths is reiterated over and over again. I have repeated to you the very words of the greatest Teachers of East and West alike, and they all say exactly the same thing: “This is the noblest religion,” “ this is the whole of *Dharma*,” “ this is the whole of the law and the prophets,” that “ye should do unto others as ye would be done by, and not do unto others as ye would not have done unto you.” And the very deep and yet also utterly plain and simple reason for the teaching is that One and the same Self, One and the Same Life of God, lives in all; and the sensing, the feeling, of this marvellous Fact is Love; and therefore Love is God,

and God is Love; and to him who has sensed this "mystic participation" of "all in the life of all," *Indirāj-i-kul-fil-kul*, as the Sūfis say, to him, that which is mystical and mysterious to others, becomes the plain sun-clear and most practical rule of daily life, the Golden Rule of Christ and of all the Great Lovers of Mankind.

It is true that a technique is needed, to apply the Golden Rule, discriminately, duly, correctly, in the different situations of the different lives of different persons, within each nation separately and all nations collectively, the lives of men and women, old and young and infant, healthy and sick, student and householder, educator and soldier, judge and policeman, tradesman and manual worker, artist and artisan and craftsman, breadwinner and ascetic, physical servant and spiritual 'servant,' state-'minister' and religious-'minister.'

Th's technique has been laid down by the Patriarch Manu in his Scheme of Social Organization, or *Varṇāśrama-vyavasthā*, as indispensable commentary on his statement of the Golden Rule.

It is for the World-Fellowship of faiths, and Parliaments of Religions like this, to proclaim once again, and again and again, the Essential Ultimate Truth, and the Essential Penultimate Truths, which are common to all Religions; to proclaim that Religions do not differ, and do not differentiate and separate man from man, but, instead, that all Religions are at heart one, and therefore unite man to man; and also to set before the human world, including all races and all nations, a rational reasonable Scheme of Social Organization suited to modern conditions, which will make co-operation between individuals, and between nations and races, possible and easy, and, by its very rationality and reasonableness, will compel and impel them to cease from organizing for War, and engage with all their heart in organizing for Peace.

The World-Fellowship of Faiths, which held its first convention in Chicago in 1933, was started expressly to promote sanity and world-peace amidst the nations, and to seek "Spiritual solutions of Man's present problems, such as War, Persecution,

Prejudice, Poverty-amidst-Plenty, Antagonistic Nationalism, Ignorance, Hatred, and Fear."¹

That World-Fellowship is gradually establishing branches in all countries, to carry on its work, day after day, till the Insanity of the Nations is cured. This Parliament of Religions, held in connection with the centenary of Paramahansa Ramakrishna, who belongs to the same Spiritual Race as all the Great Lovers of Mankind, is fitly helping in that very great work.

It is my great loss that I am prevented by causes beyond my control, especially the demands of other unavoidable public duties in the Legislative Assembly now in session in New Delhi, from attending personally, the Sessions of the Parliament of Religions, and seeing the kind faces of so many sisters and brothers, engaged with one heart and mind in such beneficent work, and bathing in the bright and life-giving sunshine of love radiating from them.

I have to content myself with contributing my humble mite to your work, vicariously, in the shape of this small basket of flowers picked from the wonderful gardens of the Great Lovers of humanity.

I pray that the work you have been doing here during this week, Dear Sisters and Brothers! may live; may grow and spread; may help to bring home to the Indian People and to all Peoples "*The Essential Unity of All Religions*";² may place before them a Scheme of Spirituo-Material Solutions, by proper social organization and planning, of all the problems that are harassing and indeed dementing Humanity, and threatening to kill it, in soul first, and then in body afterwards; and that you may thereby bring to the homes of all in abundance, the Bread that we all crave, and without which we die, Bread Spiritual as well as Bread Material, the Bread of Life here and, even more, of the Life hereafter, the Bread that alone brings Everlasting Happiness.³

Om! Āmīn! Amen!

¹ Foreword to *The Proceedings of the World-Fellowship*, published in 1935.

² For further details of the thoughts of this paper, the reader may see my book of this name, and *The Science of Social Organisation* and other writings.

³ Transliterations of the Arabic and Persian quotations of which the English renderings appear in this learned paper have been omitted.—ED.

THE PROBLEM OF WORLD-PEACE

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The most vital problem of the day that is engaging the serious attention of the sages, savants, philosophers and thinkers of the East and the West is undoubtedly that of World-Peace. Notwithstanding the much-vaunted Covenants, Pacts, and Sanctions of the League of Nations, and the high-sounding professions of faith and goodwill expressed by churchmen in the delivery of the Armistice Day orations for the prevention of war and establishment of peace, notwithstanding the holding of the sessions of International Peace Conferences, Disarmament Conferences and so on and so forth, the earth-grabbing propensities of the Western and Eastern nations have not abated in the least. Every nation strengthens and increases its war materials and seeks to grab its neighbours. The League of Nations with all its paraphernalia of pious declarations had not been able to recently prevent wanton aggression of Italian Fascist Government from making war upon the Abyssinians, the brutal conquest of the land in pursuit of its imperialistic policy and the enslavement of a free people in the teeth of their bold united stand, nor has it been able to check the recrudescence of inhuman destruction in Spain.

In spite of the impotency of the League in fulfilling the very object of its existence, some people cannot think of world-peace without the League. A striking plea to support the League was recently made by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who declared in the last International Peace Conference that "the world without the League would be a nightmare of uncertainty, a nightmare of arms, rattling of steel and creaking of moving cannon." This enthusiastic sponsor of the League, and other people of his way of thinking must realize that unless people begin to be God-fearing, truth-loving and alive to the consciousness of the Self within, of the inherent divinity in man and woman, of spiritual solidarity, of universal service and brotherhood, and of international comradeship, world-peace sought to be established by a combination of world powers would be an illusion, an unpractical thing.

Wars must take place in the world so long as there is war in the soul of man himself, so long as man is selfish and brutal in nature. Every sincere peace-loving man must realize that a power deeper than political convention, a spiritual power, is needed to restrain wars and provide a true and lasting foundation for world-peace. If God's rule of righteousness, peace; justice, goodwill and solidarity among mankind is faithfully and sincerely adhered to, wars must cease and permanent peace and harmony shall prevail. People must seek first the Kingdom of God and put its rule above the sway of national ambitions and aggrandizements. Swami Vivekananda with his true prophetic vision sounded a note of warning to western nations against their plunging headlong into the feverish race for lust, gold and earth-grabbing. He declared most emphatically that in every nation he that feared God and worked righteously was accepted by God. He and his brother-disciples preached, and their faithful followers are preaching, in two hemispheres the spiritual messages of India, Ramakrishna's Gospel of love, faith, righteousness, peace, goodwill, universal acceptance of faiths and service. They are advocating in the strongest possible way the development of a spiritual power capable of establishing peace and concord among mankind. They are exhorting the people of the two hemispheres to *live* the life and realize the divinity in man and woman and the essential spirituality of life—the outstanding message of the Vedānta and of Sri Ramakrishna.

It is, therefore, of supreme importance that in these anxious times when nations are once more on war-path and are deliberately refusing to believe in the efficacy of spiritual power and are adhering to brute force to achieve their objectives, all must listen to the dynamic teachings of the Vedānta, the spiritual messages of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda for the establishment of the world-peace; that is to say, all must have implicit faith in the power of the spirit, the inherent divinity in man and woman, the unity of soul, the common substance of humanity, the dominance of the spiritual over the material, and the deepening of the spirit of comradeship between man and man, nation and nation. All must fully realize that to hurt one's

brother is to hurt one's own self, that truth and mercy meet together, that righteousness and peace kiss each other and that righteousness exalteth a nation but sin is a reproach to any people. Proud and haughty people of the world must remember that better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right and that he that rules his spirit is better than he that takes a city.

Let Ramakrishna's Gospel of direct Realization and Experience, Synthesis and Harmony, Reconciliation and Acceptance *in toto*, Universal Love and Service, Peace and Righteousness inspire the distinguished gathering of this august Parliament and be echoed in the hearts of the Eastern and Western men and women alike. Let us be true to the spirit of the teachings of all the prophets and seers of the past and the present as well as of those that will come in future, for our permanent peace and happiness. Peace, Peace, Peace unto all!

ETHICO-RELIGIOUS EQUILIBRIUM OF GREAT CIVILIZATIONS

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Humanity is still far from being one complete whole formed by strong and close national or international bonds. We are menaced by fratricidal wars, and it is even in the middle of the most pretentious civilizations that are being manifested the forms of barbarity connected with bellicosity. In past ages, the most dissimilar civilizations were oftener brought into struggle with one another than into mutual combination. There were "ethnical civilizations" which divided one of the so-called "races" from another, which moreover were far from pure-blooded as they pretended to be. We are gradually advancing towards "ethical

civilizations " in which the confused and arbitrary conception of races does not play any prominent part, and in which it is the intellectual and moral principles, the most characteristic modes of psychological solidarity, which contribute to the continued co-operation of groups and peoples with a view to simultaneous progress in every domain (scientific, artistic, moral, religious, juridical, political, technical and economic). The " barbarism " may content itself with a scientific and technical progress and with accumulated power and wealth ; the highest " civilization " values above everything else the respect for moral personalities, and safeguards it by all individual and collective rights for the accomplishment of the human tasks favourable to the intensification of the will for peace and collective security uncircumscribed by time or space. All those who claim to be "civilized" today should exert themselves for the realization of this higher social order.

The chief of all the social energies susceptible of co-operating with or opposing one another, for or against the equilibrium of great unities, peoples or civilizations, are decidedly the ethico-religious forces, constituted by the "believers," more or less closely united, often forming hierarchically or federally organized groups. The past is full of their antagonisms and frequent atrocious struggles which they have caused by their mutual intolerance. It is the true essence of all moral or religious faith, and of all political and juridical conviction, and in the highest degree in the churches or communities of the faithful, to affirm one's faith with an energy which may appear to be indomitable, to incline towards martyrdom, and also towards persecution, or at least to an excessive proselytism, without any respect for the beliefs of others. Believing that the believers forming collective unities all on a sudden consider themselves to be in possession of "truth," some of them even feel to have experienced a revelation or an illumination which imposes on them, in their eyes, the obligation to work for the conversion of their less privileged brothers. The delirium of prophecy or evangelization may reach the highest degree of morbid systematization resulting in the dulling of the spirit and a blind exultation of the heart. The religious faith has always been something dramatic, precisely

because those who play the role corresponding to their mystic convictions are placed above the vulgar interests and consider themselves as participating in the most moving of all human tragedies, in the struggle for the welfare of the whole humanity or its most important part. Hence results a permanent possibility of mental and moral disequilibrium of exceptional seriousness: individual or collective mysticism may turn to contempt all the forms of natural and terrestrial life, which in its turn causes a disequilibrium from the point of view of social life which is closely connected with the nature and positive conditions of existence.

The exaggerations of asceticism which may go to the length of the monomania of depersonalization, mutilation, suicide, or martyrdom, are further joined by individual or collective deliriums with illusions, hallucinations, interpretations, impulsions and obsessions, which lead the groups or the crowds to irrational comportments in the most varied domains. Thus the absence of an effective counterpart of religious effervescence, the absence of intellectual and practical equilibrium in the domain of sentiments results in grave social psychoses of which the consequences may be fatal for peoples and civilizations. And as each ethnic evolution comports a close connection between the manifestations of the common temperament or character, of beliefs of all sorts, of the norms of public or private life, of the principles of morality and law, of the habits, customs, traditions, institutions, and of the religious faith (along with rites, its dogmas, the whole of its metaphysics, mythology and legends), it is inevitable that the civilizations based on the race or the ethnic solidarity of the different peoples which participate in them, should be radically opposed to one another and tempted to launch into mutual conflicts on every pretext when everyone would exaggerate for himself his own religious zeal.

The internal disequilibrium and the external disequilibrium of nations, national psychisms or national souls,—these are the general sources of fanaticism, particularly when “prophets,” “inspired ones,” leaders or “suggesters,” particularly the talented ones, act to move the multitudes by their comportments, attitudes, gestures and speeches, and sometimes by their ecstatic states,

influence the masses incapable of critical deliberation, credulous, and carried away by their collective strength into enthusiasm in favour of the "marvellous". That is why reason and the positive science, the daughter of human intellect and the mother of technical progress, are so frequently opposed in the modern ethical civilizations to religiosity, diverted from its normal end and its truly human role.

And this is also why it is in the nature of these veritable "paints" of modern times to contribute with increasing insistence to the work of reconciling the ethico-religious faith with reason, positive science and technical perfection. This is what Sri Ramakrishna seems to have done in the last century in the midst of the noble Hindu nation which has conserved much more than the European peoples a profound religious sentiment attached to an ethnical tradition, but which is progressively inspired by a broad-minded humanitarianism.

Social equilibrium calls for the disappearance of fanaticism, intolerance, constraints and exclusive enthusiasms, intransigent dogmatism and individual or collective psychoses which may fit superstitious peoples but hardly any enlightened nation,—but not the disappearance of the religious sentiment or moral practices, the norms of healthy and happy life, which are susceptible of deviation from an ardent faith in the supremacy of spiritual values. The imminently "positive" character of our scientific knowledge, our sociology (deliberately subjected to the scientific methods of investigating and verifying the hypotheses by the confrontation of the ideas and the data of sensible experience), should not initiate an incomplete systematization to the exclusion of religion from the normal social life. A "Parliament of Religions," with a free tribune admitting all who adhere to the supreme principle not only of toleration but of profound respect for all moral convictions, may play an important part in re-establishing the mental equilibrium of the whole world: it goes without saying that it is not its duty to determine—as would be done by a council of some particular confession—the fundamental dogmas of something like an eclectic church, but incapable of becoming universal; if a parliament is called for the purpose of

legislating, it might include as many particular legislations as there are peoples with peculiar customs, traditions, aspirations, modes of thought and of feeling and acting. Political federalism may serve as a model to ethico-religious federalism: let us concede to each ethnic type the right of colouring in its own fashion its mystic sentiments regarding the beyond and the relations between the sensible life and the supra-sensible. Let us confine ourselves to ask of every honest man and all free believers and free thinkers, the respect for some essential rules without however wishing to impose upon anybody a definite form of thought and sentiment or of the attitude in regard to the "divine." What matters is confronting the proper aspirations to every people or every class of believers with the purpose of disengaging from them what unites them in a common opposition to the exclusivisms fatal for all ideals. Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and other religions which have historical antecedents and which are ceaselessly changing themselves without however departing from particular traditions, have found and will find their justification whatever might be the metaphysical "truth" (if ever it is possible for any person to recognize this truth for the purpose of judging, condemning or justifying the religions). In the eyes of the sociologists it is of little importance if some religious beliefs are founded on legend and mythology: "poetry is truer than history" every time the poetry has succeeded in creating a current of ideas, sentiment and collective comportments, which persists and develops and becomes a social reality, a social force—the source of action and collective life. It is in the spirit of the sociologist that it is necessary to examine the problem of all religions, and all the religious beliefs both orthodox and heretic.

Hence all the sects, all the churches, all the confessions, far from plunging themselves into reciprocal anathema, have but to occupy themselves with their essential social function which is to realize the "spiritual communion," the source of a mystic fraternity and the basis of a universal religious ethics. Between lay morality, which does not demand any metaphysical or theological postulate, and the religious morality which is not based on any particular confession the distance is not so great as people

are usually inclined to believe. The lay ideal, if it is conceived without any prejudices, is a social ideal, of which the empire is limited to the sensible world ; the religious ideal connects this social ideal with a transcended spirit, which for the believer in human reason is the cause of providential inspirations and manifestations capable of guiding the man in his weakness through the way to improvement and progress the end of which is sainthood. There is none who does not feel happy to see the believers paying homage to a positive ethics, which sometimes requires almost superhuman courage, and see the resurgents of religious faith, thanks to which the effort for indefinite perfection in the human mind is more easy, more sustained, more effective, and is placed at the service of a much larger number of noble resolves.

Thus the religious faith considered independently of the appurtenance to some particular confession, appears to be capable of and destined to contribute, even in the contemporary societies which are hardest smitten by positive science and industrial technique, to the social equilibrium, as the result of the intensification which it effects in moral work which is the integral part of all the achievements of civilizations.

THE WORLD'S NEED OF RELIGIOUS UNITY

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In 1914 Mr. Frederic Harrison, leader of the English Positivists, remarked to me that present world conflicts would never be resolved until the religious problem was solved. I think that Mr. Harrison's remark still holds good, even in an intensified degree. Practically all who are thinking in world terms see the world's need of religious unity. There are many signs that movements are beginning, in all lands of advanced culture, in this direction. The purpose of this paper is to emphasize from the point of view of sociology the need of religious unity, if not among

all peoples, at least among the leading cultured peoples of the world. Either the world will have to find its way very shortly to some sort of religious unity or else religion will be discarded altogether, as it has been in Russia, and practically also in several other nations. It is to be taken for granted, of course, from a sociological point of view that such religious unity can be attained only through a synthesis of all the human eternal values in existing religions. To say this, however, is not in any way to solve the problem of religious unity, because it does not tell us which of these values are to be uppermost and to lead, or organize, the rest.

World religious unity cannot be attained on the basis of mere toleration, or an absolute tolerance of all systems of religious faith. I cannot agree, therefore, with the teachings of the Hindu saint, Ramakrishna, to the effect that "every faith is a path to God." On the contrary there are many faiths which are pathways to social disintegration and dissolution. Ramakrishna himself was nearer to a true perception when he said, "Truth! It is Truth alone that I want to realize," and when he added, "Knowledge leads to unity, and ignorance to diversity." Here indeed is the key to present religious disunity, at least so far as regards religious essentials. It is psychological, sociological, and philosophical ignorance which is at the bottom of the religious diversity of the advanced nations of mankind. A speaker at the Harvard Tercentenary, Dr. Etienne Gilson, of the College de France in Paris, came near to this perception when he said:

"Our only hope is a widely spread revival of the Greek and medieval principle that truth, morality, social justice, and beauty are necessary and universal in their own right. Should philosophers, scientists, artists make up their minds to teach it, and if necessary to preach it, in time and out of time, it would become known again that there is a spiritual order of realities whose absolute right it is to judge even the state, and eventually to free us from its oppression."

It is evident that my assumption is that religion is a search for truth, especially regarding eternal values; and that I further assume that there are such values that hold for man universally

I furthermore hold that any religion which is not in accord with universal truth will not stand. Religion like science demands objectivity, reality. If it does not represent objective reality, it cannot endure any more than science. It is time that all friends of religion should seek to exclude from religious faith mere wishful thinking. The question therefore arises, do we know enough about objective reality to build upon our knowledge a rational religious faith? Many religious leaders still say that this is impossible. If it is impossible, then religious unity is also impossible. With Mr. Gerald Heard in his *Social Substance of Religion*, I hold "There is a future for religion, not as an illusion, but as something which will have less and less illusion about it." Until the friends of religion come to this conclusion, there is no hope of reconstructing religion for the entire human world. If we continue to think that religion may safely play with illusion, the motto of Soviet Russia that "religion is the opium of the people" will have more and more widespread acceptance.

I tried to make this clear in my work on *The Reconstruction of Religion*, published in 1922. In that book, I said:

"Science, then, no less than religion, is positive in its attitude toward experience. It does not proceed wholly by doubt, but affirms to be true what is tested by experience. Faith in the world of human experience, when taken as a whole and its errors allowed to cancel one another, is the supreme faith of science. Science rests upon this faith. *It is even so with sane religion.* It, too, builds itself up out of the experience of life. If it affirms to be true certain beliefs and values, it is because it finds these to be justified by their works in the lives of men and in the whole structure of human society. The chief difference is in their history, that science has kept the open mind and has revised its appraisals of truth as experience has widened; while religion, becoming enmeshed in traditionalism, has too often refused to do this; it has too often remained static while society has been evolving. It has too often failed to keep the open mind."

If religion is in any sense a search for truth, it is evident

that there should be no separation or divorcement between science and religion. As Ramakrishna said: "Knowledge leads to unity and ignorance to diversity." The modern world knows only one way of obtaining reliable knowledge and that is through experience. Science is, or should be, tested and organized experience. It should therefore furnish a basis for religious faith. It will not do to solve the problem of the relations of science and religion by saying that these two occupy different provinces of life ; that science is limited to the quantitative, to what can be weighed and measured, while religion has to do with the qualities and values of life. No such division between science and religion can stand before critical intelligence. We need not use the word "science" if we do not wish to do so. Perhaps it would be better to substitute such a phrase as "tested knowledge." I shall use "science," however, as meaning "tested knowledge," and in this sense science is the first part, or section, of the pathway to all truth. It is, or should be, tested and organized human experience, not of course the experience of one man, or of any one group of men, but of all mankind or rather of the best minds among all mankind. Science in this sense is the most reliable knowledge which we have regarding our world and regarding mankind. It is, of course, also to be taken for granted that our knowledge of man, of human history, of collective human life, is more important as a basis for religious faith than our knowledge of physical nature, though the latter may also be of help. It is tested knowledge in this sense which will lead to religious unity among the more highly cultured nations of mankind. It is ignorance of man, of human society, and of the relations of man and nature which remains the source of religious disunity among cultured peoples.

We come then to this conception of the relations of science, in the broad sense in which I have defined it, to philosophy and to religion. Science in the sense of tested knowledge is the first part of our pathway to the perception of universal truth. It is limited, however, to what can be demonstrated by experience. Philosophy goes a step further, or rather several steps. It takes up the pathway of logical inferences from the demonstrated truths of science. It carries us as far as the intellectual perception even

of ultimate truth can go. But man cannot live simply by the intellectual perception of truth. He must in some way or other connect his perception of truth with his emotions and his will. Truth must be incarnated in life. Here religion steps in to complete the pathway to truth. It takes the wings of faith and carries us not only to the pure intellectual perception of truth, but to its emotional and practical appreciation. There is therefore no excuse for confusing religion with either science or philosophy. Religion is obviously in the realm of faith; but the faith which religion teaches us may be a rational or reasonable one, based upon knowledge and experience. Science, philosophy, and religion are therefore each, so to speak, a bridge to truth. But we are foolish when we try to pass over the last bridge without having first passed over the first two; for a rational religious faith must remain in harmony with sound science and sound philosophy. Until the teachers of religion see this, there will be no hope of unity in their teachings. Until religion becomes transfused with the spirit and transformed by the method of science, it will continue to be regarded by many emancipated minds as an illusion.

If religion is the summed-up meaning and purport of our whole consciousness of the possibilities of life and of the universe, if as such it should be transformed by the spirit of science in its search for truth to guide man, then the question still remains what facts of experience are of most importance for the religious consciousness. I have not denied that man's relation to nature is of the utmost importance for this consciousness. I would only affirm that man's relation to his fellow-men and to the destiny of his race is at all times of equal importance for the religious consciousness, and just at the present time of much greater importance. For man is threatened with the loss of his sense of eternal values through the conditions which he finds confronting him in the human world. Neither truth nor right *there* seems to possess the universal validity which religion would ascribe to them. If religion is not for the salvation of man in this world as well as in eternity, then the peoples of the world are bound to lose their faith in the efficacy of religion and to regard it as an illusion. If, moreover, religion is not for the redemption of our human

world as a unit, but only for the redemption of a few individuals, then again faith in religion is in danger of being lost. The present condition of the world permits of no doubt that the adjustment of men to one another, of classes, nations, and races to one another, is the primary task of religion if faith in the possibilities of human life is to be maintained. Professor Gaston Jeze says that the nations of Europe are in the midst of chaos because of the dreadful increase of immortality among them in international relations. Governments today, he says, deny solemn obligations if such happen to be against their momentary interest. They discuss matters with guns in their hands and threats on their lips. Honesty compels us to acknowledge that this statement is true more or less of all the nations of the world. Moreover, the relation of classes and races is not on an appreciably higher plane. If religion cannot bring some healing to the nations, history will become again synonymous with homicide, and all of our hopes for a civilization which will be built upon the perception of the higher values of life will be blasted.

A very slight perception and understanding of the facts and truths regarding human relations should teach us that there is only one way out of this situation; and that is through mankind accepting the principle which Novicow, the Russian sociologist, tried to teach nearly a generation ago; namely, that human beings, whether as individuals or as groups, live together successfully only through conferring mutual benefits upon one another and through mutual sacrifice for one another's welfare. In other words, Novicow tried to teach that human society and everything of value in it depended upon active goodwill and mutual aid; and that just in proportion as this active goodwill and mutual aid was equalized among individuals, classes, and nations, in that proportion human society prospered.

With the active or latent enmity and hatred which we find now diffused through the whole complex of human relations, it may be asked, how such a scientific perception is anything more than the preaching of an impossible ideal. The reply was rendered centuries ago by Gautama Buddha when he said: "Hatred does not cease by hatred; hatred ceases only by love." Applying this

principle to the situation which exists among the warlike nations of the world, it becomes evident at once that the only pathway to peace is through a peace of reconciliation. Even a peace of justice is impossible, because no nation or class can agree with any other nation or class as to what justice is. Only a peace of reconciliation is possible, a peace of mutual forgiveness and mutual concessions.

Only a religion which teaches the duty of mutual love and mutual forgiveness can possibly save classes, nations, and races from the enmity which is their inevitable destruction. But we need more than a religion which will place mutual love and mutual forgiveness among the virtues of the religious life. They must be made *the supreme virtues* of the religious life, even to the extent that men are taught that their supreme duty is to love and forgive their enemies. The present situation of our human world brings to the fore, and even demonstrates to all minds which have not lost their common sense, the supremacy of goodwill and love in human relations. It does not matter whether these relations are those of the family, the community, the nation, or mankind. Of course, we are not speaking of natural affection. A limited goodwill and love cannot bring about the redemption of our human world, or the reconciliation which is needed among its warring elements. A religion which is adequate for the redemption of mankind must teach an inclusive love which extends even to enemies. This inclusive love or goodwill is, of course, but the conational and emotional side of the actual organic interdependence which sane social science finds to exist among all individuals, classes, nations, and races.

It may be said, of course, that this paper is but a plea for the recognition of the scientific character of the religion of Jesus. But it might well be replied that a religion of love and goodwill would not lose its scientific character even if no man's name were attached to it. Human beings, however, do follow personal leaders; and mere intellectual honesty should lead all students of religion to acknowledge that Jesus of Nazareth was the first to teach that the service of God was to be sought in the service of mankind, especially in the service of those most needing service.

beautiful and delightful things, and where friendship, kindness and love can be practised by everyone? How is it that while science has taught us to produce far more than ever before, yet production is restricted, or goods even destroyed when produced, while millions of people lack the prime necessities of life and health? Why do we spend fabulous sums on goods whose sole use is for the destruction of our fellow-men and their wealth, whilst the money is urgently needed for making life more tolerable for numbers more?

It would seem that the present moment of history is one of transition between two eras. In the West the past century has been a time of unparalleled growth in mastery of the physical world. In my own life-time the change is almost incredible—from oil lamps and horse-drawn vehicles to flight through the air, and the sound of the human voice carried instantaneously through the stratosphere from one corner of the earth to another. Science has gone forward by leaps and bounds—we reverence the marvellous world it shows to us, ruled by exact laws, which the skill and the devotion of men have enabled them to find out. We know, in our everyday lives, that these laws must be obeyed, for by no other means can the desired results be obtained.

But when we turn to the social life of man, we find no such devoted study of the underlying laws—in fact scarcely any belief in the existence of such laws. Rather do we find that men are anxious to harness each newly-found power given to them by science to the fulfilment of their own selfish desires or interests and cruel projects. We find them devoting their energies to breaking the social laws, that they may harm those to whom they have already done wrong. For they have not learnt, what the chaos of today should surely make clear to every one of us, that the laws of the moral world are as exact as those of the material, and that we can no more expect to be whole in our mind and soul if we do wrong than we can be well in body when we over-eat and over-drink. And not only individuals must follow these laws, but nations, for nations are as dependent on their fellow-nations,—their welfare and their prosperity,—as are individuals dependent on their families and towns-folk.

So the present position of the world cannot last, for today the nations are like angry beasts waiting to kill or torture anything that stands in the way of their selfish appetites. They *must* learn the law divine that they are all part of one great unity—the fellowship of mankind; they can only be bound to each other by the bonds of service for the good of all. Science, which has so far seemed apart from the moral world, must drive mankind to realize this law, for by its “magic” it has brought us all so near together that we cannot much longer believe in our separateness. The punishments too that it brings upon us for disobedience of the moral law will be so terrible that man will be driven to open his eyes to the truth. So Science, as Gerald Heard has said, will bring us back to the Sermon on the Mount of Jesus Christ.

The great truth that I am trying to emphasize was uttered long, long ago to the Jewish people by their great prophet Moses in these splendid words :—“It shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: and all these blessings shall come upon thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes, that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.

“For this commandment which I command thee this day it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes, and His judgments,

that thou mayest live and multiply ; and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

“But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them: I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life, and the length of thy days.”

But this is not all. We Christians believe that a still greater prophet “made all things new” and that His wisdom is as true and as urgently needed in the complicated tangle of today, as in the simpler days in Judea when Christ spoke to them.

In His words we have truths so great that we have not dared to believe them: He told us amongst many wise sayings the following: “Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you.”

“The first (commandment) is . . . The Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.

“The second is this. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

But, alas! we have not kept these laws.

The Jewish prophet Esdras wrote: “When was it that they which dwell upon the earth have not sinned in Thy sight? Or what nation hath so kept Thy commandments? Thou shalt find that men of note have kept Thy precepts; but nations Thou shalt not find.”

He was right, not only individuals but whole nations must keep these Laws; and surely we are beginning to understand that great fact today. .

So I have a vision of the new world to which this cruel moment of transition should lead us. It should be a unity—a

family of nations, all co-operating to serve the needs of all, with free movement of peoples and materials. How ridiculous it is to try to keep men in separate cages, when they can soar up even into the stratosphere! And how ridiculous, too, to coerce men to think alike! For the great white light of Truth contains innumerable colours of different strands of thought, and we can ascend to unity by different paths.

Let us keep such a vision always before us and let us strive with all our powers for its attainment.

In the great words of Cicero writing a century before Christ:—

“ And there will not be one law at Rome, and another at Athens, one law today, and another law tomorrow, but the same law, everlasting and unchangeable, will bind all nations at all times; and there will be one common Master, even God, the Framer, the Arbitrator, and the Proposer of this Law.

“ And he who will not obey it, will be an exile from himself.”

MORALITY AND POLITICAL POWER

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Nothing is more characteristic of present-day conditions than the growing divorce in every sphere between the dictates of traditional morality and the practice of the holders of political power. It is the most deplorable of the many unhappy legacies of the war period, when the stress of war conditions resulted in the wholesale acceptance by men, nurtured on, and hitherto adherents of, the traditional moral code, of the dangerous doctrine *salus reipublicae suprema lex*. The secret treaties of the war were justified in every country, not on the grounds of their intrinsic merit, but on the plea that any means must be resorted to in order to make certain the victory of the fatherland. In the same way the war settlements were carried through essentially in the spirit of national aggrandizement. When Turkey was deprived

of her outlying territories, claimants were easily found for all those territories which offered opportunities of successful exploitation, but singular unanimity was shown in declining the patent moral duty of protecting the unfortunate Armenians. Much had been hoped from the United States as less deeply involved in the current passions and exempt from the bitterness of wasted lands and losses by the million. But a final touch of tragedy was added in the surrender by the President of his ideals of a just peace, and the ultimate refusal of his country to take any responsibility for the post-war settlement or the future development of international relations under the aegis of the League of Nations, which duly supported might have offered the means of guiding the nations in peace, and of eliminating whatever was unjust in the terms imposed by victors whose judgment has been impaired by the unexpected rapidity of their extrication from an almost hopeless position.

It was inevitable that the decline of public morality should reveal itself in the embittered tone of domestic relations. In the United Kingdom relations between capital and labour, which had slowly been ameliorated in the years before the war, became at once bitterly hostile. The general strike of 1926 marked the furthest progress of the disintegration of society, when the organized workers deliberately planned to force the state to capitulate to exaggerated and unfair demands by withholding from the people the means of subsistence and locomotion and by depriving it of all information. Fortunately the very violence of the attack aroused the public conscience, and deprived the strikers of the moral support of many of their own members. Slowly but clearly, since then, the struggle between capital and labour has diminished. The Labour Party has returned to the tradition of respect for moral principles, and has disclaimed the use of force for the purpose of effecting its aim, the substitution of some socialistic system for capitalism, and revolutionary methods are advocated only by minor organizations such as the Communists, the Independent Labour Party and the Socialist Party, none of which command much popular support.

In Europe, however, the struggle between classes has had a

less happy outcome. In Germany, Italy, Russia in special the doctrine has prevailed that state interests are above common morality. Liberty is systematically denied ; all that is permitted is to accept the dogmas of a ruling junta, dogmas which may be varied at pleasure without affecting the paramount obligation of obedience without question. Methods differ in these three countries and in the other states which have imitated them ; but the fundamental principle is observed in all that the interests of the state as determined by a self-appointed group are paramount ; that the individual has no rights whatever inherent in him ; and that all his thoughts and actions must be made subservient to the interests of the state. It is hard in Britain or the Dominions or India to realize the all-embracing demand thus made by the state.

Nor has the Empire been spared grave conflicts. The civil war between the British and the Irish from 1919 to 1922 was followed by a conflict even more brutal between fellow Irishmen, in which both sides displayed complete oblivion of the elementary demands of the religion to which they loudly asserted their allegiance. In India neither the British nor the Indians can regard with pleasure the record of their mutual relations in the post-war years.

Not less deplorable has been the utter decline in international relations of respect for law and treaties. The high hopes set on the League of Nations were in 1936 most bitterly disappointed, when the powers without exception failed to carry out their elementary duty of safeguarding Ethiopia from the aggression of Italy. No excuse for this failure in duty, in which India was involved, can be pleaded. The obligations of Articles 10 and 16 of the Covenant were categorical ; the offence of Italy was established beyond doubt. Yet even in India excuses were invented, Italian trade was preferred to international obligation, and the Dominions in the main were as fully responsible for the repudiation of obligation as was the United Kingdom. New Zealand and the Union of South Africa stood out against surrender, but the value of the Union's protest was minimized by the fact that during the whole period of sanctions she bought off Italian resentment by continuing to pay a subsidy to Italian shipping firms. It is not surprising that the deliberate failure in duty of

the powers had a swift nemesis. Germany, recognizing that the regime of sanctions was dead, tore up those clauses of the treaty of peace which fettered her freedom of action, and since then the European world has been immersed in preparations for the war which seems the inevitable outcome of a situation in which treaties have lost all value as assurances of peace.

If Europe has thus failed in her duty, it is not surprising that Japan has encroached freely on Chinese territory, or that Japan and Germany have formed a league against Communism which may be regarded as destined to immobilize Russia in the event of further Japanese aggression on China. The morality of East and West alike has reduced itself to the rule of the stronger. Internationally co-operation is dominated by conceptions purely of self-interest, and in the economic and financial spheres each country is solely concerned with its own gains. The same phenomenon is to be noted in the relations between the several parts of the British Empire. Each unit in its trade concerns places first and last its own profits and refuses to take a wider view. Even within the federations the sense of unity has not prevailed to prevent efforts at secession on the part of Western Australia and bitter complaints from the Maritime provinces in Canada. Alberta, in the same spirit of selfish particularism, has adopted a social policy without the slightest regard to its effect on the credit and interests of the rest of Canada, just as in 1932 New South Wales endangered for purely selfish ends the stability of the whole system of Commonwealth finance.

How this state of affairs is to be remedied, it is extremely hard to say. It is as easy to destroy as it is difficult to build up, and in many countries morality of the traditional character has been desperately shaken. Something, however, may be gained from philosophy whether Eastern or Western, and a useful field lies open for the dissemination of philosophical doctrines. There are two main lines of thought in India as in Europe whence help may be derived. We may disregard the ascetic ideal which has so fascinated many minds in East and West alike. It is ultimately an essentially self-seeking ideal, however it may be philosophically grounded, and it cannot work for the good of mankind as a

whole, for it regards men as distinct atoms, without any real links of union one to another. But we have a very different ideal, prominent in Mahāyāna Buddhism and in Hinduism in the *Avatāra* and *bhakti* doctrines, and founded on a philosophy which recognizes not the separateness of individuals but their essential unity. The many Indian sages who have inculcated this doctrine include Sri Ramakrishna ; in various forms it is an essential strand of Indian thought, and, firmly grasped, it is utterly irreconcilable with those hatreds and that self-seeking which dominate society in so many regions of the world today. The belief in unity amid differences of appearance is a completely rational belief, which can be taught as pure philosophy or as associated with many systems of religion. Fearlessly posed it offers a real antidote to the particularism and negativism of the practical thought of the day.

From another point of view philosophy, both Eastern and Western, affords for certain classes of intellect conclusive motives for abating the feverish rivalries of the moment. Philosophers teach us to regard things *sub specie aeternitatis*, and to minimize the time element, the here and now considerations which dictate our actions in far too great a degree. Doubtless this point of view may be carried to excess. It is so carried when we are asked to believe in the unreality of the time process or to accept human misery as a necessary foil to the perfection of enlightened spirits. But within bounds it is well to be reminded of the comparative insignificance of the events of the moment, and to be warned not to mistake the part for the whole.

Were it only possible to apply these doctrines to the present civil strife in Spain, how great an amelioration of the situation would result. A more enlightened Christian spirit would induce those who claim to be acting in the name of the Church to remember that the enemy whom they seek to destroy are men like themselves, mistaken perhaps in their aims, but not outside the bounds of human charity. A wider survey might remind both sets of combatants, and the foreign auxiliaries who are perishing in hundreds around Madrid, that they exaggerate the issues at stake, that victory for neither side can finally determine anything,

and that the true aim is to find a solution which will allow adequate liberty of views and action, without demanding allegiance either to Fascism or Communism.

It is in truth the fundamental merit and duty of philosophy, one recognized by Ramakrishna no less than by other great minds of East and West, to mediate between extremes, to remind mankind of the unity of humanity, and to negative false claims of superiority and the selfish disregard for the interests of others which rest on the belief that certain men are naturally born to dominion over others. In the cases of some men their phenomenal success is due to the decline of the operation of reason in human affairs and the substitution therefore of irrational passions, against whose domination all thinkers must steadily and persistently strive in the assurance, *magna est veritas et prevalebit*. Of their line is Ramakrishna in whose honour this is written.

CROSS AND EAGLE

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It is not true that a change in the conception of what Christianity represents is equivalent to de-Christianization. On the contrary, a deeper understanding, in case religious and metaphysical experience remains what it was, would signify absolute progress. In this sense we are now in a position to understand better than ever before the deeper significance of the Cross. The symbol of the Cross cannot be comprehended in all its spiritual bearing if it is considered separated from that of the Eagle, under the triumphant sign of which it rose to the height of glory. Only two and no more creative attitudes of mind are possible in man with regard to reality: one is that of completely apprehending or conquering the objective world and the other of being completely apprehended or conquered by it—in other words, of complete emotional possessedness. We shall in the following name the two principles that of possession and that of possessedness. The first leads to self-control and mastery over the world. Every form of successful active life presupposes this attitude, its supreme

expression is the hero. But if the hero would alone directly transform the non-Ego in the widest sense and impress upon it his being and individuality, he would himself have little inner experience and would not change himself. His symbol would be therefore steel or granite. Steadfastness and constancy are his highest resort in inner life. This mode of being, which for the Western world has found its prototype in the antique hero, found its supreme national expression in ancient Romanism, which lived under the sign of the Eagle with an exclusiveness which has never been equalled either before or after.

Now, when this sign reached the zenith of the heaven of its significance and power, and when everything was being explained under its sign, then for the first time in history the symbol of the Cross not only beamed forth, but it did so with such immeasurable vehemence and intensity, that in course of a few centuries it conquered the whole empire of the Eagle from within. The significance of this inter-relation has been expressed by one word of Christ: "What would be the benefit of man if he wins the whole world but brings harm to his soul!" The pure eagle-man does not think of it at all ; his life is an altogether objective one,—work, efficiency, struggle, victory or defeat, death and the objective continuance of life and its continued effectiveness in memory as crystallized into fame, lend significance to his whole life ; he is not concerned with what he himself experiences therein or what would become of himself. Thus his sacrificing his life, for which he is ever prepared, signifies even more than it is: it signifies complete sacrifice of the subject himself. From this point of view it will be clear, in what sense the *exclusive* eagle-man represents the *evil* principle when judged spiritually. In the chapter "The Ethical Problem" of my *The Recovery of Truth* (London, Cape) it was shown that evil is a necessity in the living process, on the one hand as the destructive component in life which in every one of its moments is construction and destruction at the same time, and on the other, for the sake of creating frontiers and boundaries. It is not necessary therefore to revert to this theme here. But however necessary it might be for the living process, Evil still remains Evil ; he who denies that robs

the evil precisely of its positive meaning. And the more Evil becomes absolute, i.e. detaches itself from the connection with good, the more evil does it become in the generally accepted negative sense. Thus the pure eagle-man is actually that beast of prey, like what Oswald Spengler, who was absolutely blind spiritually, has described man in general. Beasts of prey, however, are enemies of all life which may serve them as food. Such were the Romans in their great days ; in order to know what they were essentially, it would not do to question them—the conquerors, but those who were conquered and ruled by them. And beasts of prey they were felt to be in those days by those who then stood for the future, i.e. the fathers of the Christian church. The exclusive eagle-man represents, when spiritually analysed, not the good but the evil principle, and there is nothing to modify or change this fact. The very fact that subjective life means nothing to the eagle-man is enough to prove this: in so far as he ignores the subjective in him he gives away what alone has intrinsic spiritual value. The external expression of this essentially evil quality is that the eagle-man, inasmuch as and in so far as he takes no account of his own self, is indifferent also towards others. Hence the horrible cruelty and hardness of all the peoples of European antiquity, particularly of the Jews who in their peculiar way stressed the eagle-principle with extreme one-sidedness. In their great days, everything was "objective" in their eyes: what mattered to them was fulfilment of law and not inner attitude. Judged from the point of view of posterity *they* are the true fathers of modern world—mastery in all non-military and non-political respects. How inevitably every exclusively ruling eagle-ethos leads to a supremacy of Evil is proved today symbolically by America, where everybody in smiling and friendly connivance claims for himself the basic right of throwing millions into misery and death for the sake of a favourable balance-sheet, and where the exclusive bent on success in the world thwarts the soul to such a degree as was perhaps never witnessed before.¹ And this is proved finally by the direct and conscious hostility against the soul of Bolshevism, murdering

¹ Cf. my analysis of the American soul in *America Set Free* (London, Jonathan Cape).

millions and persecuting every faith in things of higher value. It need not surprise my readers that I refer Americanism, Judaism and Bolshevism also to the eagle-principle: if the hero is the prototype of its principle and Romanism the highest expression it has hitherto ever achieved, there are yet innumerable inferior forms of appearance,—for instance the destroyers without any sense of purpose like the Mongolian Khans ; the adventurer who without any thought of benefiting himself or others again and again endangers his life ; the profiteer who tries to take advantage, equally superficially, of every possible chance conjuncture ; and the empty intellectual as violater of the world. But even the highest expressions of eagle-hood stand for the evil principle. The soldier however pure in mind has to kill and destroy and no interpretation can change the originally evil meaning of this activity. And if today, under the sign of a new orientation towards the pre-Christian hero-ethos, *every* kind of subjectivism is derided as clinging to the "narrow ego", and killing is felt to be a matter of course and the problem of immortality is no longer raised, this proves the same emphasis on hard and pitiless eagle-ship, thanks to whose unchallenged supremacy Christ's word on the loss of soul, which no earthly gain could compensate, could produce such tremendous effect.

At that time, in that Kairós, when the eagle was more omnipotent than ever, its absolute value and its birth-right to grow dawned for the first time on the spiritualized soul. This consciousness was of course awakened in the orient at a much earlier date, but still it is permissible to write "for the first time," because only in contrast to the triumphing Eagle the whole significance of the Cross could become clear with overwhelming force. Now it was felt by man: more important than ruling the world is to transform one's own self *in order to grow in spirit*. For that however is necessary an attitude of mind quite opposite to that of the eagle: the attitude of primary attention to one's own and other people's soul, recognizing as supreme value the *subject* within oneself and others which is ignored by the eagle. The way to one's own self however does not lie from conquest to conquest but from one complete emotional surrender to another.

In order to show how enormous is the orbit of this idea,—much wider than the compass of what has been hitherto associated with the symbol of the Cross, I reiterate here firstly what early in 1932 I wrote on the occasion of Leo Frobenius's "Schicksals-Kunde", for I can think of no better way of expressing, what is needful in this connection than by referring to Frobenius's discoveries in the field of cultural morphology. "According to Frobenius the true cultural history of mankind progresses not from concept to concept but rather from one emotional surrender to another in a ceaseless stream. Concepts, by means of which the world of actuality is mastered, are the last forms of expression of a pre-existing feeling of life ; everything that can be secondarily interpreted as a leading idea or a prominent principle, makes its appearance at first as involuntary and not-understood expression. Thus man has been ' possessed ' of this or that particular side of the total actuality in a sequence of single direction, as in the case of time, or periodically, or from one country to another. And the particular cultural structure then results *a posteriori* from the particular kind of emotional obsession. Thus at various times the symbol of the animal or the plant or the sun or the moon or the observed creative nature or a spiritual yonder world experienced as actuality got complete hold of the imagination of men. Once thus possessed, they were unable to experience anything in a different way than is determined by their pre-existing possessedness. However, as soon as the trance of the possessed people was broken, the individuality of the particular culture lost all of a sudden its vital roots. Similarly sharp and clear cut are the spatial frontiers which separate different feelings of life. Thus we know today that from paleolithic days an insurmountable boundary line separating different conceptions of life ran over the Vosges ridge. . . . The last possessedness of the Occidental man has been *through facts*. Facts in the modern sense were hardly noticed before the 18th century. But from the 19th they monopolized attention with an exclusiveness as in previous times only magical phenomena could impress consciousness. This fact of being possessed by facts alone—which possessedness is exactly of the same type as any other—and *not* any really achieved consoli-

dated intellectual progress, explains the gigantic dynamism of this technical age. But as soon as the trance of this possessedness shall cease—all the problems which were brought to the fore for the first time in the 18th century, would be done for."

The heathen Romans too were of course "possessed": namely by the pathos of devotion to the *res publica*. But as pure eagle-men they were possessed only "objectively", and moreover their main interest was politics and therewith the impersonal and blind world of Gana. For that reason the problem of personal possessedness presented itself to them perhaps less urgently than to any other people of historical importance. And precisely for that reason the Stoa could mean to them the last word of philosophy. As against this, the Christian impulse effected a sudden and equally exclusive accentuation of the pole exactly opposite to that of the Eagle: this is the pole of the Cross. But here it was not only a question of possessedness by something particular, the precondition not merely of all experience but also of all activity—without burning zeal for an object no one can devote his whole energy to it—but *the highest appreciation of the possessedness in itself under the sign of truthfulness.*

This sentence gives the kernel of Christianity. It proves at the same time finally that the Christus-impulse is indeed a decisive step forward in the process of the in-break of spirit, and that this is the essence of Christianity. The eagle-man wishes only to possess the world; not only the question of personal possessedness, but, above all else, even that of truth has no significance for him, excepting in the sense that truth can be a means to attain and exercise power. That is why statesmen and generals lie and betray so naively whenever it may be of use to them. Now the *Spirit* can grow only under the sign of truth;—its symbol is the beaming clear light. Spiritual truth however does not signify congruence of representation and being on the plane of projection of scientific knowledge, but truthfulness. That is why Christ for the first time in the Occident continually harped on the turn of speech that he himself was Truth. Therewith we have returned to the first proposition of this chapter about the significance of suffering and the Cross, and may now proceed further. We wrote:

"every man who is at all conscious of his own self is forced by his deep solitary being out of the fixations of the empirical plane. He feels: I ought to see life just as it actually is, for from the depth of my soul I wish it. I ought to find a new internal equilibrium in the sign of truthfulness, for otherwise I shall never find peace. Yet for the fulfilment of this mission even the deepest man in its entirety is not ripe at the beginning: only a complete metamorphosis can create in him the new inner state he aspires to. This process is however painful. And herein lies the whole of the deep sense of suffering." Christianity does not stop at suffering in itself. It requires acceptance of and consentment to suffering for the sake of truthfulness: Firstly in the sense that this life for the most part consists of painful experiences, and truthfulness requires it to be seen just as it is. Secondly—and this is most important—the growth of the spirit can be effected only by stressing truthfulness as such. The radical difference between Christ and Buddha may be perceived here, and it shows at the same time the former's greater spiritual depth. Buddha was spiritually more "awakened" than Christ, and he is therefore precisely at this day one of the guiding stars of the first magnitude for the whole of humanity.¹ Yet he did not preach acceptance of and consentment to suffering, but rather its elimination through a proper process of psycho-analysis. For that reason Buddhism in its own time could not initiate a historical progress. But precisely in this connection it becomes clear how absurd it is to make of Christ an "heroic" man as is done today by so many Germans. The courage of being possessed by all suffering and therewith of taking the Cross on oneself, is indeed courage of the highest order. But if it is the function of words to help man to discriminate, then Christ was no hero, but precisely his antipole: the sufferer, the man of pain endured. But he was this in the positive sense—not in the negative, as is considered by the spiritually blind people of today. He was no weakling, and none of those who are prone to avoid difficulties, and no seeker of peace at any price. But Christ was a sufferer also in quite a different sense than, for instance, the "divine sufferer" Odysseus.

¹ I have shown this at length in *Creative Understanding and the Recovery of Truth* (English Edition, London, Cape).

The latter had of course to pass through much that is unpleasant, he also complains against it, but it could not transform him and it was not even accepted in advance that there might be anything positive in his suffering. As regards suffering, issueless tragedy was the last word of the Greeks. As opposed to this Christian suffering signifies, again, acceptance of suffering under the sign of truth and truthfulness as the only way to creative internal metamorphosis.

This characteristic then distinguishes the Christus-mythos radically from all those numerous ones about the suffering and dying and resurrected gods. Of course the Christus-mythos has absorbed in itself all those older myths of this type which were current within its sphere of expansion, with the result that it has now become difficult to historical study and text-exegesis to draw exact boundaries. But, as we have said before, considerations of these disciplines are irrelevant to essential problems. The ancient myth of the martyred and dying god was interpreted by the Christians—but only by them—in the sense that the bad and the evil may prove to be such efficient instruments of self-realization that the Godhead himself did not disdain to suffer death in the most shameful way. The older suffering and dying gods were merely “divine sufferers;” they were tragic heroes of the kind of Christ as interpreted by the German-Christians, a latter-day German sect. In so far however as they were heroes, their existence too was impersonal and objective in the previously determined sense; i.e. not the personal and intimate experience with its personal results, but the objective historical situation with its externally comprehensible consequences was the main thing in it. Now it cannot be denied that not only Paul but also Jesus himself had thought in a similar way: i.e. to him too the thing of primary importance was the objectively planned redemption of mankind and its ultimate fulfilment. Yet precisely at this point it dawns upon us with perfect clarity, how little importance attaches to historical considerations in religious and metaphysical connections: what matters is spiritual *being*, and it is not necessary that its possessor should properly recognize it. For everyone, including the greatest and the freest of men, is bound by the tradition within

which he grew. Whatever not only Paul but even Jesus may have thought for themselves—the true, and in its deepest sense original and essential Christian “fact” was that which from century to century has affirmed its differential modality in ever greater relief. Today this cannot be said with too much emphasis, for the whole future of the achievements of the Christian era depends upon it: The soul of Christian truth does *not* depend upon the truth of Jewish or pre-Christian eschatology, and neither upon the conformity to reality of the ideas of expiation, redemption, hereditary sin, of sin in any one of its many Christian meanings, and not at all upon a particular dogmatism as such. All dogmas and doctrines are rather attempts to comprehend the fundamental experience of Christianity in a manner susceptible of transference by means of thought, which naturally was more difficult, the more the unconscious of the Christians was attached to pre-Christian ideas,—that is to say, it was most difficult at the beginning of our era. Moreover all particular teachings are but reading new meanings into old forms—a hitherto unused but important and necessary word, for an unusual quantity of spiritual facts are founded on it. Everybody knows that the dramatic poet requires a pre-existing theme, in which to plunge his whole mind, out of which at-onement there then emerges a creation so original that no one ever thinks of the alien element. Now the course of every man is the same as that of the dramatic artist, inasmuch as he endeavours to realize his own self. The spirit realizes itself always in projections; but it can project itself only on what is existing. The more it is possessed by it in the sense explained above, the more of his intrinsically own—not the more of what is alien to him—comes into existence. This is the explanation of the fact that ever again has mankind interpreted the whole universe into one particular book—I am thinking here not only of the sacred books, but also of the *Odyssey* which was regarded by the Greeks as a text-book of morals, of the *Divine Comedy*, of *Faust*, and even of Hitler's *My Struggle*—, and that on one and the same text, about the exact meaning of which much honest labour was lost, have been founded the most different and mutually antagonistic philosophies, theologies and theodecies.

From this it does not follow however that such practice should be condemned: but rather how necessary it is to most men to pay allegiance to certain adopted texts. Otherwise they cannot realize their own selves.

The differential significance of the symbol of the Cross as opposed to that of the Eagle, and therewith of Christianity as opposed to antique heathendom, is, if expressed in the language which is best understood today, that suffering accepted and borne and consented to in the spirit of truthfulness *changes* man and herewith advances the process of the inbreak of spirit. At least in one respect the Christian spirit is not only the opposite pole but also the exact opposite of the spirit of antique heathendom: while the latter forbids dwelling on suffering, the former rests solely and wholly on one's voluntarily confessing the suffering to one's own self. External victories may be the easiest to fight out, when personal experience is laughed away, but inner progress is completely dependent on surrender to the process of inner progress. And this and this alone was the original purpose of Christianity. More than any other religion of the world, Christianity subordinates everything to the growth of the spirit. Whatever facilitates this growth is good, whatever retards it is evil. This proves suffering to be better than triumph. For only he who completely confesses to himself what is going on in him, only he who deepens and accentuates his experience as much as possible through attentiveness to it,—only he achieves spiritualization deeper than from what he started. Such confession is however always without exception closely bound up with pain and suffering. Self-analysis, searching of conscience, internal struggle, conquest of one's own self, repentance—they are all processes of inner metabolism which give pain. And only those can achieve true progress who do not shun their pain, but who take upon themselves everything under the symbol of supreme truthfulness.

Thus it is that the Cross, the Cross which is voluntarily taken up and borne, is actually the only way to greater spiritualization. This paradox (from the standpoint of all occidental pre-Christian history) explains all the exaggerations of truth which were given

credence to in Europe time and again, such as the consentment to or even the glorification of dishonour, infamy, disgrace, contemptedness, and of misery, ugliness and disease. These exaggerations in their deepest sense do not mean reaction against or over-compensation of antique lordliness, but only an over-emphasis of the truth that intense possessedness in proper attitude conjures the greatest internal transformations leading to the greatest creativeness in the positive sense. Precisely this fact explains these epidemics of longing after suffering which have time and again raged within the sphere of Christianity, be it in the shape of self-flagellation or other kinds of mortification; and it also explains the astonishing popularity which has been always enjoyed by the preachers of hard penance also without the Christian cosmos. Even in the greatest artistic age of Florence no Florentine had enjoyed such popularity which fell to the share of Savonarola, whose request was precisely to sacrifice all that was beautiful. This is something quite different from the mortification of the flesh, the cult of which has been developed most by the Indians and the Tibetans. Such mortification attaches no value to suffering for its own sake; it should only serve to steel the will, to liberate the spirit, and elevate the soul through established training. Both the *yogi* and the Jesuit lay as little emphasis on suffering as the sport-trainer. But in the case of the Christian, voluntary acceptance of the Cross accepted and emphasized suffering for its own sake means the way to salvation.

Now let us look back: has there ever been a thoughtful race of man which ~~did~~ not know this? Why have they never imagined the intellectually and spiritually great ones to be happy men? Why have they rather always demanded that they should be subjected to more ordeals than the lesser men? For the rest the world-process is full to overflowing of the required suffering. He who has meditated my *South American Meditations* knows how absolutely nature is contrary to all norms of the spirit which represents the true inner norm of man. The more a man grows greater and higher in spirit, the more deeply does he feel the conflict with the non-spiritual in him, which is yet a part of him, and which he is not able to modify according to his ideal. All

that is pure and noble and profound, however, cannot but provoke the hatred and mortal enmity of all that is ugly and lowly and superficial. There has never been as yet any notable exception to this rule.

This is the individual side of the kernel of Christianity in relation to Occidental history. The social side of it is represented by the fact that the stressing of one's own suffering induces the capacity for suffering with and for others, that is the capacity for sympathy, owing to which the voluntary acceptance of suffering awakens the desire to improve the world. One is gripped by horror when one realizes how natural was the conception of slavery even to such lofty spirits as Plato and Aristotle,—even though the slaves might have been princes even yesterday. They did not even raise the problem that slaves should not be treated in a manner unworthy of man. They absolutely lacked that imagination of the heart which is lacking even today in most Asiatics. This imagination awakened only through the voluntary acceptance and stressing of suffering. It is clearly possible, for all experience proves it to be so, that even men who are otherwise good and profound in mind maltreat other beings in the most cruel manner whom they consider to be of lower niveau, if they have never confessed to themselves their own suffering. If from this standpoint we consider the most normal phenomena not only of the pre-Christian, but of the Christian era, then it becomes clear to us, to what a degree the message of the Cross is of eternal actuality. Today particularly the small people, whose life is hard and who have to be hard against each other in order to be able to live at all are most pitiless towards their own class. Rarely do they concede to each other the right of falling sick, rarely do they spare each other, and rarely any sympathy is shown when one loses one's means of livelihood. Among peasants whose fundamental qualities for some undefined reasons seem to be parsimony and close-fistedness all over the world, are met with quite often even in present-day Germany conditions similar to those so powerfully described by Jeremias Gotthelf with reference to Switzerland: that the poor are as a matter of course despised and derided and treated as without any rights so far as it is permitted by law.

This hardness of small people is much harder than anything ever evinced by clan-arrogance, for even though the man of noble lineage or high position may not consider the common man to be of the same status as himself yet he feels no envy towards him and usually does him good voluntarily as best as he understands it. Where however the upper classes are very hard and cruel to the common man, it is always of a piece with the obduracy which they bring to bear on their own selves. The most unchristian of all phenomena in this respect is the characteristic behaviour of the intellectuals towards each other. For reciprocal generosity of even the slightest degree is a rarity among them. Shamefully they envy each other in the acrimonious intent of mutual disservice, excepting when they belong to the same coterie or fight on the same front, in which case the mechanism of identification may deaden the envy and finally carry off the palm. From this point of view the position of the majority of German intellectuals is quite horrible since Nietzsche and his pupils furnished them with the weapons of psycho-analysis and characterology with which to supply an unconscious evil motive to every conscious thought or to interpret all that is noble in the light of baseness, and to contemplate all celestial phenomena in the perspective of the nether-world. But even these, which are perhaps the most repulsive of moral aberrations known in history, are in the first instance characterized by the fact that they do not confess to themselves their own essential being ; they transfer it to others and ab-react thereby, in the form of malicious joy, what they themselves had suffered and what could have ennobled them. The most harmless, but unfortunately the most frequent form at the same time of unchristian absence of imagination of the heart is the tacit approval of the suffering of those whom they recognize to be spiritually great: they do not take part in the suffering, which would be of benefit also to them, but harden their heart under the pretext that the suffering redounds to the benefit of those who suffer. Also those who thus refuse to suffer themselves are in truth being hard on their own selves ; for they miss the view of their own real condition and in this way conjure up horrible consequences in the form of disease, murder, starvation,

extermination, etc., so that they would have had to admit afterwards if they could have understood what they do: "We have been more pitiless to ourselves than others have ever been." Wherever people are thus hard on themselves, the ancient Roman proverb may be applied: *homo homini lupus*. And there is only one way to awaken heart's imagination and therewith sympathy: To confess to oneself one's own suffering.

Now, if this happens in the profundity of heart, then the hardness melts away in the long run of itself; it then becomes physiologically incapable of further existence. This explains that the Christ-impulse, however hard Jesus might have been on all who did not belong to him, however loveless and cruel ideas are bound up, even to this day, due to the literal-minded belief in the texts derived from pre-Christian times, with the religion of love, has slowly but irresistibly effected progressive humanization, and on the other it also explains why this is true only of the Christ-impulse. Neither in Indian *bhakti*, nor in Buddhistic pity, and neither in the culture of the emotions of Confucianism, is there any stimulus to make life better and easier for all. The Indian thinks only of his own solitary self; only for the sake of this self, and not for the sake of others, would he be good and charitable. The Chinese of the classical age was charitable only towards those with whom he stood in one of the recognized forms of relation. Unless touched by the Christ-impulse none can realize the Christian attitude to one's own suffering, thanks to which, in creative metamorphosis of the soul, suffering leads man to feel sympathy for all suffering and enables him to carry not only his own cross but also that of all others. Herein lies the *eternal* significance of the symbol of Christ's death for the deliverance of all. No other religion has produced such saints as Dostoevski's Starez Sossima who sincerely believed to be himself guilty of all the crimes of others. Thanks to the reception of the Christ-impulse, we Occidentals, originally hard-hearted and loveless compared with Oriental peoples, have drawn most of the practical consequences that can be derived from the power of sympathy. The Christian attitude awakens and fosters, shapes and intensifies precisely the imagination of the heart. The man in whom it is

very much alive, suffers in the most personal sense, not less from other people's sufferings than from his own. Rather he suffers more from them. Strictly speaking, almost every one can endure what befalls him personally. But only those who lack imagination can stand the suffering of others, for to the spirit which lives out his life in the form of images, representation is more important than actuality. The direction which the imagination would take with regard to the nearest depends on free stressing. It is the greatest social achievement of Christianity for the benefit of mankind to have initiated this new orientation.

THE NEED OF THE MODERN WORLD

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

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Yesterday and today you have listened to beautiful speeches accentuating the unity that stands behind the multiplicity of the world. From time to time sages have appeared in different parts of the world, particularly in this land of ours, who have again and again brought before our gaze the underlying unity of the universe. But such is our proneness to evil, such is our forgetfulness, that we have not paid the necessary respect to these great teachings. You remember, as early as the days of the *Rig-Veda*; a great sage in the depths of his heart realized the eternal Truth and proclaimed in unequivocal language: "Truth is one, sages call it by various names." Now that is the Truth, and it could not be expressed more simply and more directly. But though the same Truth has been reiterated again and again in different lands in different languages in different ways, still we see the present state of things in the world. Buddha gave his wonderful life of purity and renunciation for this world, gave his sublime teachings for us all, and still we see that strife has not vanished from the world. Christ did the same thing. He also laid his life on the Cross, but his grave teachings have not been followed as they should have been. In the same way, other great Prophets and saints have expressed the Eternal Truth in beautiful words,

but still we see that this world is not a proper place for decent people to live in. Even before our eyes, in Europe, as you know, blood is being shed between brothers and brothers, and still we want to say, we are all living in a civilized world. It seems to me it is high time that each of us pays proper attention to those great Truths expressed by the different seers of the world in different ages and tries to see where the mistake lies ; because at no other time of the world's history was the need for unity, for peace and for concerted action towards general betterment greater than it is now, because now, in this twentieth century, our wants have multiplied, our desires have gone up by leaps and bounds and we are trying to exploit science for the satisfaction of our desires. But just as a powerful gun may protect people's lives against robbers, similarly in the hands of a person who is not of a good moral character, in the hands of a ruffian, for instance, that same gun may be a veritable engine of destruction. Therefore in proportion as science is giving us new discoveries, giving us better ways of adding to our comforts, we do not exactly know how we can make use of those advantages. Hence there is more need at the present time of looking over those ancient sayings of our Prophets, the Prophets of all countries, and we must try to see where the mistake lies.

In our age, Sri Ramakrishna, whose Centenary we are celebrating here, gave expression to those noble thoughts which were again and again repeated in this ancient land. This is the purpose for which great personages are incarnated in the world. They pick out from the traditional lore of spirituality those gems that are best suited to the requirements of modern times, to remove our obstacles and miseries and take us directly and in the most expeditious manner to Peace and Blessedness. Sri Ramakrishna was perfectly aware of the conditions in the midst of which he was born, and he has left for us all his beautiful message of the harmony of all faiths. Not only that, by his own glorious life of God-intoxication he has shown how every individual, be he a man or be she a woman, ought to live a life here in order to attain the maximum benefit from human existence. Creature-comforts can be had in any birth ; probably animals can enjoy

sense pleasures much more intensely than human beings can. So it is for man to know something higher, something nobler, something that will be really worth the name, and Sri Ramakrishna, like all the great predecessors of his, has pointedly drawn our attention to the fact that it is not by imitating animals, not by pandering to our propensities, that we are to rise in the scale of existence, but it is by self-abnegation, self-sacrifice, by living for others. In other words, it is not a life of the senses that we are to live, but a life of mergence in God for Peace, or at any rate, a life that will be in direct touch with some aspect of divinity. By this he was not saying anything new, because the Vedānta philosophy, which represents the quintessence of the Vedas and which was preached and promulgated in this land thousands of years ago, has been the groundwork, of which all the scriptures and teachings of different religions have been explanations, as it were. You remember the great words of Śrī Kṛishṇa, "Whenever irreligion prevails, I manifest Myself," and "Through whatever path man approaches Me, I reciprocate that devotion in that very way." In these words there has been laid for us a beautiful procedure by which we can terminate our miseries, and Sri Ramakrishna, instead of being book-bound—in fact he did not care for books at all,—by dint of direct realization exhorted us repeatedly not to care for things of the world, but to find out our relationship with God. He did not believe that man can achieve the highest by living a life of the senses ; rather it is by fleeing away from the senses and turning his gaze inwards, that he can see the Eternal Life shining.

The Vedānta philosophy, of which Sri Ramakrishna was the latest exponent, preaches the unity of all existence. No matter how clouded our vision is at the present moment, the Vedānta definitely says that there is no multiplicity of souls. There is but one Ātman, the all-pervading principle. Just as the same sun may be reflected in millions of little water-drops, and each of those reflections may appear to us as little suns, so the same infinite God, call Him Ātman, Brahman or what you will, is reflecting Himself through all this multiplicity of souls, but in reality it is the same one God. There are no two Gods in the universe, and whether we are aware of it or not, there is always

an essential union between us and God, because otherwise no power on earth could remove that state of separation—no power, no amount of knowledge would unite us with God again. The Vedānta, as you know, is a very scientific religion, taking its stand upon the bedrock of realization, the realization of different saints and sages. It has proclaimed that in every one of us there is the capacity to realize the Godhead. In other words, for material things, you may have to undergo much labour and exertion, and sometimes your labours end in vain, but in the matter of realization of God, in the long run we are bound to succeed, because it is something that is already in us. Just as in a room that is screened off there may be many things which we cannot see so long as the screen is there, but if there is a small aperture in the screen, we see part of the contents of the room, and if the aperture is larger, or if the screen is entirely removed, then we see those things exactly as they are, similarly with God-realization. In other words, all these blessed qualities for which we aspire—infinite life, infinite knowledge, infinite bliss—are in us already. Only we have forgotten all about them, and the remedy lies in bringing back the knowledge—de-hypnotizing ourselves, as it were. Hence I said, it entails much trouble to acquire things of the outside world, in which one may even fail at the end, but as regards internal realization, realizing our own nature, the result is certain to come. Therefore if we are really sensible of our miserable condition, if we are not satisfied with the present state of things in the world, if we really want to improve the existing conditions, it is up to us to reconsider our position thoroughly and see where we are wrong, and the Vedānta says that it is by separating things, by raising walls of division between one class and another class, between one race and another race, that we are suffering so much. Take the case of the Great War, for instance. What was it that caused it? The idea of separateness, which is the product of ignorance. Each nation thought that its existence was at stake—thought that without such and such a possession it could not live in the world. So this war came into the world, and the state of things has not changed an iota even now.

The Vedānta asks, where are you seeking eternal happiness, eternal peace, eternal knowledge outside of yourself? Even if you go on doing it, do you think you will get them at any time? Therefore for the attainment of real peace, the Vedānta asks us to turn our gaze inwards. Instead of frittering away our energies in trying to acquire riches which last for a few days only, or to get a little book-learning which will hardly add to our real knowledge, the Vedānta asks us to go within ourselves and try to see what is there. It says, just as the musk-deer roams about in search of the beautiful odour, but finds it nowhere because that odour emanates from the animal itself, so we are roaming about here and there in search of little pleasures pertaining to this sense or that sense, simply because we do not know the real source of the joy that drives us maddening onwards. Therefore the proper course of attaining peace, happiness, light and knowledge, is to turn our gaze inwards, to be introspective and to see what is already there. Sri Ramakrishna, in this materialistic age, proved by his wonderful life that the claims of the old religions are not false, rather they are literally true. Those of you who have read the wonderful life of Sri Ramakrishna know how through different paths of practice he came to the same truth, the unity of the Godhead, and how armed with that knowledge of realization, he proclaimed that Truth is one, though sages call it by various names. Therefore it is possible for us also, at least partly, to scale some of those heights that Sri Ramakrishna scaled completely in the course of two or three days. The first thing that is necessary is a great yearning for Truth, for real Bliss. At the present moment, we are also yearning for happiness, but not knowing the real source of it, we are seeking it in the outside world. Sri Ramakrishna, like the true seer that he was, pointed out that such happiness cannot last long, that death is the terminus where we must part with everything earthly, and unless we acquire here something which will enable us to overlook the claims of the outside world and will make us free, real happiness, real peace, real knowledge can never come to us.

Having got that yearning within us, we must have perfect sincerity. That is the chief condition. We may be born very

low in the social scale, we may not have any book-learning or material wealth, but if we have this true sincerity in us, if we have the real thirst for peace and happiness, it will come to us through the realization of God. In other words, it is by sincerely treading the path laid down by the great seers of the world that we can attain that Eternal Truth which they realized for themselves in times past. Another thing on which Sri Ramakrishna laid great stress as a means to realization is non-attachment, detachment from lust and possession. One of the Upanishads says, "Whatever there is in the world must be clothed with God." In other words, instead of seeing a diversity of creatures, only physical bodies separated by a thousand divisions, we must see the unity that is behind them all, the unity of the Godhead; and if we are really sincere, if we are really hankering and are not led away by our physical bonds and and cravings for things of the senses, God-realization will be an achieved fact for us. It may be even in the shortest possible time. One of the scriptures graphically says that it takes only so much time to realize God, as it would take a mustard-seed to drop from the horn of a cow. We may think that since even our ordinary pursuits demand so much of our time and energy, God-realization being the highest achievement must necessarily require a far greater amount of time and exertion; but Sri Ramakrishna in one of his beautiful similes says, "If a room has been dark for a thousand years, it does not require another thousand years to remove that darkness. All that we have to do is to strike a match and the darkness vanishes." Similarly, the eternal ignorance that has been keeping us in the dark, that has made us think that we are limited or powerless, can be removed in a moment if we can bring the light of true knowledge. By turning our gaze inwards and by praying to the Ātman sincerely, we can make the Almighty, powerful though He is, to reveal Himself in just that form which appeals to us. There is no hard and fast rule as to which way will suit us all. Sri Ramakrishna's advice is, "Choose your own path according to your inclination and capacity." Choose any path that you like and for which you deem yourself fit. If you persevere, if you are not distracted by mundane things, your search is bound to end in success and even in a

shorter time than you imagine. Sri Ramakrishna was an object-lesson of this great Truth. Time and again, while giving discourses on Divinity, he would be lost in a trance or *samādhi*, the highest state of concentration, when one forgets the world. As in a dreamless sleep you forget all about the world, so in that state of supreme absorption, he forgot all about the world ; and he declares that it is possible for us to realize that state, provided only we are willing. He says, God hears our prayers, no matter how silently they are uttered, and some day or other, He will reveal Himself to us in accordance with our earnestness and sincerity.

Thus he has given us a message of great hope and encouragement. We need not think that we are despicable or low. Banish those words from your dictionary. It is you yourselves who attach importance to sin. You are the children of God. You cannot be sinners. It is a sin to call yourselves sinners. That is the proper attitude according to the Vedānta, and if we really aspire after Truth we must take our stand upon the basic unity of God, and armed with that knowledge, we may go boldly into the outside world again, to serve mankind in different ways. That is the explanation of the great lives of personages like Christ and Buddha. Their humanity was entirely gone, only divinity remained. But that faculty of achieving union with God has not ended with them. In fact, our scriptures say that there will be more Incarnations. We can realize for ourselves the eternal oneness with God and translate the same to the service of mankind. This is the secret of the great power of the Christs and Buddhas of the world. How is it that an ordinary man can move even a mountain? This essential union with the Godhead is the secret of power. In the ocean there are little waves and each wave is different from the others ; but when the wave loses its identity in the ocean, merges itself in the ocean, it becomes the ocean ; similarly, we who consider ourselves as little souls, can melt our ego in the great Ocean of Divinity, a substratum that is always behind us, from which we can re-emerge possessed of super human power. At that time, even if we were ignorant before, we shall come out transfigured as sages. Then our words will

have power enough to move mountains. Therefore, no matter how unpropitious our present circumstances seem to be, let us never lose courage, let us always struggle on and on.

Those periods during which we strive for little things, without knowing the real source of peace, are lost to us, whereas even a little effort for the realization of our own nature is fraught with the greatest consequences to ourselves and others, for it helps thousands of weary souls to cross this ocean of misery. Therefore my prayer to you is,—have that knowledge which comes of the realization of your own self, and with that inspired vision of a Rishi come out into the world and try to remove the misery that you see everywhere. Through you wonderful things will then be done ; but till that blessed moment comes, let us not slacken our energies. Let us think within ourselves that others have finished their part in the world, and we alone are the persons that are yet to do their part in this great task. With that belief and a firm faith in ourselves that we are the children of the Almighty, that we are eternally one with Him, let us proceed for the amelioration of the condition of the world. Let us first realize God in our own selves, and out of that realization will come infinite power—power that will move the world. Then only will our eyes be illumined, and we shall see the greatness of all scriptures of all faiths, and understand that it was we ourselves who misinterpreted them. Therefore, while there is life in us, let us make a determined effort to realize the great God that is always united with us, that has never been away from us, and then coming out into the world, let us share the results, the successes. with every one that is on the face of the earth. Let us then be prepared like Buddha to lay down our lives for the sake of a little kid, for we shall feel no difference between ourselves and the kid. God will be both inside us and outside us. Even misery will vanish. It will all be a divine play in which we are to join. May God help us to achieve this in this very life, may He give us the necessary patience and perseverance, purity and determination to carry out this object. Through His grace may we be helpers in removing misery from the world in the best way possible, so that it will be not merely temporarily relieved, but gone for ever!

AN INCOHERENT CONTINENT

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On the whole it may be said that each of the five continents of our globe is more or less homogeneous specially from the point of view of ethnology and geography. Moreover all the beings living together finally begin to resemble one another. But there may be also another explanation—those who resemble one another assemble together. Thus Asia is the land of the yellow race, Africa of the black, Europe and America of the white. Moreover these continents have been in the past characterized by different particularisms.

But Europe perhaps represents a more pronounced unity both racially and geographically. The Europeans are probably descended from the Indo-European race, their three main European branches being the Latins, the Germans and the Slavs. Their languages although quite distinct from one another contain many words derived from the same roots which indicate their common linguistic source, the Sanskrit language, and they also prove that India was the cradle of the Indo-Europeans.

For many centuries Europe constituted a single unity, thanks to the power to say, "I am Europe." After the fall of the Empire, Europe owed her unity to the Christian Church which dominated all the states of Europe which were considered to be but a great Federation headed by the Pope of Rome. To what an extent the Christian Church had been a great power in those days is proved by the history of the Crusades. But the Christian Church began to lose its authority on the lay peoples and the state organizations primarily through the discussions between the Eastern and the Western Church: only one part of Europe has since then been under the authority of Rome, but this authority too was further diminished by the Protestant reform, which to the great detriment of Christianity provoked religious wars resulting in the weakening of Europe's influence on the rest of the world. In attacking the authority of the Pope and the Catholic Church in which was

incarnated the religious idea of God, Protestantism destroyed the idea of all authority: how could a terrestrial authority (man, group or state) impose on others the divine authority of God? On the other hand, since there arose struggles in the Christian Church itself its influence in the cause of peace was seriously diminished. People said with justice: how could the Christian Church preach for peace among peoples when the Church itself is ravaged by discussions?

The French Revolution further reduced the divine authority by straightaway rejecting every form of religion. Its effort to replace God by human Reason could not of course fill up the gap caused by the disappearance of divine authority which rather came to be represented by intellectual and social anarchy. In fact the authority of human Reason is the authority of man, but how could man have that authority if God, Who is above all men, could not exercise that power? But society exists on order, and order in its turn is based on the authority of an idea. When the revolutionary period was over and the empire came into being it was thought that the papacy will recover the prestige it had lost during the revolutionary regime in France and along with it the idea of a universal state in Europe supported by the Catholic Church. But nothing came of it. In fact, when on the occasion of Bonaparte's Coronation the Pope stretched his hand to place the crown on the head of Napoleon, the latter snatched it away from him and crowned himself with his own hands, declaring by this act that the French state was perfectly sovereign and did not in any way depend on the Church of Rome.

On the other hand, the French Revolution by proclaiming the principle of National liberty, i.e. of the sovereignty of peoples at the side of that of individual liberty, annihilated the idea of a united Europe: from now on the European states which were organized on the principle of nationalities departed more and more from the conception of a single community of the white race which, living in internal peace, would represent outside Europe a solid and predominant force. The whole of the 19th Century passed in Europe under the sign of a battle to create national states in the place of dynastic ones,—the states in which the

nationalities had no role to play but only the dynastic families which by aggrandizing the territory of their states aspired only to augment their own power: it was of little importance to them whether their states were nationally homogeneous or not. During their origin from the medieval idea of the serfdom of man to his master and to the soil to which he is attached, the dynastic principle was essentially based on the theory that the inhabitants were simply paid labourers on the soil belonging to the king. The monarch was the *master*, and the men attached to the soil were nothing but his *subjects*. The French Revolution profoundly changed the character of the state, the state (soil and the inhabitants) belonged henceforth to the *people*, to the *nation*,—the latter was no longer servant and subject but the real master, and the monarch merely an *institution*.

This new conception doubtless greatly contributed to the enhancing of the dignity of man and of letting him free to form his fortune, but at the same time it imported a new germ of war: in fact, however antiquated might be the idea of dynastic states, it was certainly more favourable to international peace than the conception of national states. For the European dynasties often related to one another, would not so readily make war among themselves and their particular family ambitions were as often held in check by the fear of risks associated with wars. In their calculations of conquests there was always a certain rational element which prevented them from exposing themselves to hazardous and dynastic combinations; the national sentiment took up the reins in the direction of states; there was initiated an epoch in which the states quite unrestrained in their elementary irrational forces and their desire for expansion and in their national megalomania struggled with economic imperialism for the first place. Like the spirits of Faust, which, once released from their phials, would not return to them but wreck the whole laboratory of the doctor, even so foreign domination or extension of power over other peoples: they could no longer conceive of any limits to their fanaticism. The small nations were the most enterprising: not having much to lose by a great European war, they too bore a great part of the responsibility for

the rivalry of great powers, which on their side utilized them for their own imperialistic policies. The small peoples, carried away by the ideas of liberty and of the sovereignty of their nations which came to them from the West, were truly a great hindrance to the peace of Europe in the 19th Century: culturally little advanced, and that precisely because of their subservience to foreign governments, they were capable only of bringing destruction to the great state-organisms of Europe, without being able to construct in their place anything better in solidity and durability: these were merely negative forces.

Doubtless these small ethnic groups could not have the power of endangering general peace if the great powers were inspired more by pacifistic sentiments than by their appetite for domination and prestige. Surely in this case they did not remain inactive in the face of the declarations of the representatives of the small nations: "We shall realize our unity by a great European war,"—declarations which reflected more or less also the sentiments of responsible factors. Thus in June, 1903, when a military conspiracy murdered the King of Serbia at Belgrade, the queen and the ministers as well as the great powers did nothing to prevent the distressing spectacle of the murderers monopolizing the whole power. On the contrary they thought it expedient to recognize the *fait accompli* and the new government in Serbia. England alone took up an attitude more in accord with the principle of legality of modern law and broke off diplomatic relations with Serbia, but she too did not go to the point of actively resisting the Serbian political methods, and she let herself be gradually assuaged by some concessions from the new Serbian government and at last consented to send her minister to Belgrade.

There is nothing surprising therefore that a final cataclysm should come. The murder of Arch-Duke Frantz Ferdinand at Serajevo was not the cause of the Great War but only the occasion for it: the real genesis of the war has been explained by us above and war would have certainly broken out with fatal result some day or other on the pretext of some other occasion. The murder at Serajevo did but unleash the sinister forces. But what is most

remarkable here is that the great powers could not find any other mode of liquidating the affair of Serajevo than of aligning themselves in two opposite camps for and against a murder.

The war of 1914-1918 spelled the fall of Europe: cataclysms of similar nature were known also in previous history but none was so disastrous as this. Who knows if Europe will ever be able to recover from it? And to this cataclysm greatly contributed also another white continent—America, notably the United States. Thanks to the intervention of the latter the war was prolonged for two more years, for from the view-point of military and economic situation of the two belligerent groups in 1917, the war could not have been continued much longer, and it would have been possible perhaps to achieve a peace of *entente*. The United States, instead of aiding in it, rendered the war even greater and more atrocious by provoking in this way the Russian Revolution and with it the rise of Bolshevism. President Wilson will always be famous for his *volte-face*: before the presidential election of 1916 he appealed to the neutral powers to support him in his efforts to persuade the belligerent parties to launch peace negotiations, but he completely changed when elected president: now he invited the same neutral powers to take up arms against Germany, there was no denying this fact. The Lusitania incident could not excuse the behaviour of President Wilson: The question here is not whether the United States should have entered the war for this reason; the question is that President Wilson himself could not have declared the war. If he had considered the war to be inevitable, the Vice-President was there to decide the question (what is the use of institution of Vice-President, if it is not for cases like this?) and not the same man who had solemnly preached peace only a few months ago. The success of the Allied policy of exterminating the enemy took the place of accommodating peace which would have reconciled the old enemies after the peace. And it is this policy of extermination which still dominates the relations between the European powers, of which the result will be another explosion like that of 1914.

What is exactly the cause of the fall of Europe? It is the absolute lack of a fundamental and guiding ideology. Europe vaunts of being the pillar of Christianity, the three centres of the Christian Church—Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant—are in Europe and yet the peoples of this continent have for more than four years fought with one another in a war which is more cruel and inhuman than any known in history. On the one hand the Europeans are the recognized adherents of Him who had taught: "thou shalt not kill" (that is to say, not even in self-defence), and on the other hand they have attacked one another so ferociously that it may appear that their religion enjoins rather just the opposite—"thou shalt kill." There can thus be no ideology or logic in it. For if they are Christians they should never have fought and killed and if they really make war they should frankly admit that they are not Christians. One can be a partisan of Jesus or a partisan of Satan, but never both at one and the same time,—one can never follow the precepts both of Christ and of the devil, for in trying to follow both one would miss both. Europe is as much diabolical as Christian—it is therefore neither. It possesses two irreconcilable ideologies. The European continent is a world without system, its existence means chaos. But a chaos cannot pretend to have the right to govern the world and humanity as European always does. For the world is a *principle* and a *system*.

Europe did not prove itself to be less illogical at the time of the conclusion of the peace treaties (1919-1920) which should have terminated the great war. But Europe could not but be illogical. In fact those peoples among whom logic was completely at a discount, as proved by the war itself, were incapable of being consistent in their later action—the treaties. These treaties, results of conferences to which German delegates were not allowed excepting under military guards, represent a dictated peace. It is difficult to find even in the darkest period of ancient history examples of more humiliating brutality. And its authors were Christians! The ancient Romans when subjugating their enemies were at least consistent: in their eyes force was the guiding

principle in human society as in physical nature. The treaties of 1919-1920 were not at all conventions between independent contracting parties: they were simply judgments in which the judges imposed on the judged whatever they chose. They even imposed on the central powers the sole responsibility for provoking the war, implying that the judges were innocent victims.

The principle of nationalities for which it is said, the allied powers had made war, was treated in a peculiar way. It has surely to be recognized that the statute of present-day Europe has to show many ameliorations over conditions prevailing before the war, but it is no less true that new injustices have been committed. Millions of inhabitants have been subjected to foreign rule by these treaties. There is only one change in favour of the victors: it is now they who are occupying the place of the vanquished. For instance, formerly it was the Slavs who were under the rule of the Germans and the Hungarians, but now it is the latter who are governed by the Slavs. It is not in the scope of this article to give a complete list of the ideological inconsistencies of this Christian continent. But let us at least mention the greatest of all these inconsistencies, the league of nations. All the errors of this institution are derived from the impossibility of the desire of the pact, which created the Society, for achieving the solidarity and collaboration only of the victorious powers to the exclusion of the vanquished. Moreover it is well known that independent and sovereign states are absolutely elementary physical forces with a tendency to extend in time and space in all directions giving rise to unavoidable conflicts—the wars. How could it be conceived that such forces could be harnessed to a collaborating union? In consequence either a league of nations without independence and international sovereignty of its members (that is to say a unique federated state), or the latter but without a league of nations. One or the other but never both at the same time. We have therefore to choose between these two opposite terms: either independence and international sovereignty of the states with eternal wars, or peace—but that at the sacrifice of these two principles.

Also the colonial question, resuscitated above all by the Italo-Abyssinian war, has demonstrated the inconsequences and the lack of logic of the European powers. For it was particularly the powers possessing most colonies which raised objections against the Italian conquest of Etheopia and posed as champions of the liberty of the black peoples, although they hold millions of foreigners under subjection. In fact, we have to choose between these two things: either the league of nations should recognize the principle of equality of all colours and races and thus abjure all the colonies of all the European nations and not only of Italy; or it should frankly place the white race above all other races, in which case also there should be an equitable distribution among the European states of the overseas colonies. But no, the league of the great victorious powers who are in a position to say, "We are the league," serve themselves with the formula: "All that is duty should be demanded of others,"—a formula which perfectly characterizes the mentality of modern Europeans. Nevertheless some justice should be done to France which of all the colonial powers was conscious of this paradoxical situation, whence her hesitations regarding the attitude towards the Abyssinian question.

The European peoples are trying to demonstrate their solidarity also by the principle of non-intervention: according to this principle the government of a country is absolutely free to be as reactionary and retrograde as possible and to prosecute, imprison and shoot down its adversaries without the least fear of intervention from foreign states. Such a law can never be a Christian law, for it bids us remain idle when our fellow-beings are being murdered. And the more the Spaniards are intensifying their brutalities, the more the great European powers, which are all Christians, are proclaiming their duty of not interfering in the affairs of Spain.

We have tried to trace here a picture of the European continent and although it is dark enough, yet it is below the actual reality which is still more sombre. The reality is that Europe is a hell. A hell has not the qualification to be the leader of the world, and in fact Europe is no longer the leader. Before the

great war the other races respected and feared the white peoples of Europe, but after the latter had appealed to them to help them in destroying themselves and after seeing the European at work in his own home, those races have no longer any respect for the Christian continents. Gone are the days when at the call of Emperor William II there appeared before Shanghai the united flotillas of the European powers to demand satisfaction of the Chinese for the murder of a European minister. On the contrary during the great war these flotillas destroyed themselves before the eyes of non-Europeans.

Can Europe still be saved? Yes, provided Europe becomes truly Christian, that is to say not only by the rites and the words but also in sentiments which would enable her to establish a truly Christian peace. Then Europe would again be able to control the world though on a different ethical basis from that of the past. But in order to be able to realize that ideal it is necessary to make of Europe a single state,—a federation which would begin its work by suppressing the international law which owes its existence only to war: in fact the basis of international law is the principle of the international independence and sovereignty of the states which is the germ, as shown above, of all these eternal wars among peoples.

The abolition of international law in Europe and its replacement by a European federation similar to the Swiss or the American one—this is the only way of salvation for Europe. But without a sincere reconciliation of the French with the Germans, who are the two greatest continental powers, there will never be a federation of European states, and, in consequence, there will be no peace in Europe. The leadership of the world will then pass over to some other continent, America, or Asia. We believe it will be rather Asia than America. *Light came from the East*: Jesus Christ was born on the soil of Asia, where He was preceded by the Buddha, the Apostle of equilibrium and peace of the soul. In other words the Apostle of peace should now take the place of our Faustian dynamism always agitated and out of equilibrium.

THE SHELL AND THE KERNEL OF RELIGION

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Several discourses have been delivered on this platform and elsewhere in connection with the celebrations of the Birth-Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, on the incalculable value derived by humanity by the advent of this *Avatāra-purusha*. The course of the deluge of materialism is sought to be arrested; the liberation of the spirit from the thralldom of matter is being more assiduously advocated; the voice of the harbinger of peace and of the harmony of faiths has been heard; the gospel of self-confidence and aggressive service has been broadcasted; the possibility of the reconciliation of sects and creeds has been demonstrated beyond doubt; the problem of bringing into line the conservation of individual spiritual values with that of social values has been solved; the national ideals of renunciation and service are being proclaimed now more effectively; the day of persecution in the name of religion in a gross and coarse form is almost past, though in a subtler form it is still creeping and in some places would appear also to be making headway; freedom of conscience is trying to escape the grim grip of intolerance; that spiritual life is the only life worth living is being proclaimed throughout the Earth. Magnificent and wonderful have been the results in harnessing the secularist and the materialist; the need for reforming and refilling those who have come into the fold is none the less important and none the less urgent than that of bringing more recruits to the realm of the spirit. To conserve them and keep them against decay and resolve into sham is no mean service both to them and to humanity at large. The salvation of the world will be nearer at hand if only those who profess religion either momentarily or for a large part of their lives are really and significantly religious as Sri Ramakrishna was. Several things now pass for religion. To remind the forgetful world what religious life really imports, has been the main purpose of the *Avatāra*. No truer statement has been made on this platform

than that of Sir Brajendra Nath Seal that Sri Ramakrishna never sought only to take out the essence of religions, leaving behind the rituals and ceremonials that preserved it—never tried to pick out the diamond out of its setting, as others had done ; that he was a Hindu with the Hindus, a Christian with the Christians, and a Mussulman with the Mussulmans in their fully expressed lives. This is clearly indicative of what importance the saint attached to both the aspects which to Him were only complementary and not contradictory. For the growth and preservation of the whole cocoanut fruit, the rind and shell are absolutely necessary until the full growth is secured and the shell has served its purpose.

What do we find in India now? The south is more swayed by formalism and ceremonial, while the north is lacking it owing to various causes; the spirit is lamentably absent in several parts, while both the form and the spirit have been discarded in others. The educated man in his disdain for forms gloats over his confidence in retaining the spirit apart from form. In a short time he loses both. The unlettered orthodox man retains a dead form to the ridicule of the better-knowing and it serves him to eke out an ignominious life. I crave your indulgence for a few moments to illustrate the state of affairs by a short story. A *sādhū* was living in an *āśrama* in a forest with his disciples. A kitten somehow managed also to get into it and gradually became a pet of the *sādhū*. It took, however, greater freedom with him than it should have. It began to disturb him in his hours of meditation. To keep himself free from the disturbance of this pet, he used to tie it to a post when he contemplated to sit in meditation. This went on day after day. His disciples observed the *guru* tying a kitten to the post whenever he chose to meditate. They thought that tying the kitten was an essential preliminary to meditation. Within a few days each procured a kitten for himself and the *āśrama* became full of kittens. Observing this, the *guru* enquired of his disciples what the cause of the influx of such a large number of kittens was. They blatantly answered by another query, "Do we not require kittens for meditation?" The *guru* had to admonish them for their thoughtless action and explained to them why he himself had to tie the kitten. Several of our people are

in no better position than these disciples. Again, those who worship in temples are enjoined to sit down for meditation in temples after *darśana* of the Deity in the Shrine. The purpose of the sitting is now forgotten and you will be surprised to observe ladies or even grown-up men resting their body for a second or two on the threshold even without knowing why they do it. The important portion of temple worship is in its culmination in *dhyāna* and that is unfortunately left out.

Then again, during the initiation of a boy in *brahmacharya* and in his *upanayana* ceremony, grotesque caricatures are taking place and the boy who is asking for alms is receiving them in golden and silver plates, himself clad in rich silk and laced clothes. The *upadeśa* or initiation into the *mantra* occupies a less important place in the whole function. There are numerous other instances of our passing through lifeless formalism. We have not yet the courage to give it up altogether, nor earnestness enough to understand its significance and go through it with life and fervour, to the benefit of all. Rituals and ceremonials have a philosophical background. They successfully democratize religious truths which would otherwise be inaccessible to the masses. I have heard it said that Sri Ramakrishna could not bear to put on the *kāshāya* or ochre-coloured cloth of the *sannyāsin*, to wear which nobody had a greater claim, without going into *samādhi* at once, for to him the colour of the cloth indicated the union of the night and the day as typified by the brick-red sky of the evening. To him every outward suggestion must have its significant purpose fulfilled, as he was the embodiment of sincerity and truth. Cannot his life inspire us with the earnestness needed to infuse spirit and life into our rituals and ceremonials and make them effective and beneficial? Cannot our educated brothers abstain from discarding them and adopt them as their repository of religious truths until they have grown in spirit high enough not to need them? What we find among the Hindus obtains among the votaries of other religions also. To them also, the life of Sri Ramakrishna must be a beaconlight and help them to spiritualize their observances. One other observation, I crave permission to make. It has been said that Sri Ramakrishna, though he practised and

realized the ideal in other religions, was still a Hindu. One who has passed fully into the region of the spirit and has reached the highest watermark vouched to a *sādhaka* belongs to no one sect or creed; to him the path which has enabled him to reach the point is of no greater concern and no more his own, and other paths are as precious and valuable to him as the one by which he reached. He is in the position of one who has got into the terrace through one of the several staircases by which it is reached and in the position of one who is in the midst of a tank with several *ghats*. He owns no path as his own and all are his, those of the Hindu, the Mussulman, the Christian, etc.

Another stray thought strikes me and somewhat oppressively. It is about the co-operation and sympathy which the organization of a Parliament such as this has secured or rather failed to secure. While we rejoice that the active assistance of the more thoughtful and of the intellectual academicians has been secured for this undertaking (which is highly beneficial to humanity and to the spiritual advance of the world), would it not have been better if we had been able actively to persuade in a larger measure those engaged in the propagation of their religious doctrines to participate in and profit by the deliberations of this august assembly? We have been told that the purpose of the Parliament was to place before the assemblage the excellence of each religion or sect. It is not that other religions have not such excellences in them, but some have laid greater emphasis upon one aspect or another. The purpose of such declaration of excellence is, I take it, to enable the various religions to influence one another to facilitate their growth and for all of them to combine their efforts to combat successfully the demon of materialism. How could that co-operation and inter-influence be secured, unless each is imbued with the spirit of *live and let live*, and unless each gives up the attempt of adding to its fold from that of others? It is perhaps incompatible with the doctrines of a religion to recognize other paths as true and seek harmony in religious faith. The claim of exclusive perfection should naturally militate against the recognition of the harmony which it was the privilege of Sri Ramakrishna to proclaim to the world. Fancy an ecclesiastical

magnate patronizingly trying to appreciate only the humanitarian aspects of the Hindu religious sect and deigning to call it a lesser faith! This happens in the year 1937 and after several Parliaments of Religions have taken place! Without the co-operation and sympathy of such sects, which believe only in exclusiveness and mass and economic conversions at propitious times, the purpose of the Parliament will not be easily fulfilled. And may I say it will then be somewhat like the transaction of the League of Nations with Italy and Germany standing out? Will it be too much even for the great Ramakrishna who only wanted the Christian to be a better Christian, a Hindu to be a better Hindu, a Mussulman to be a better Mussulman, to turn their hearts also?

HINDUISM OF TOMORROW

SWAMI SAMBUDDHANANDA

Ramakrishna Mission

Hinduism, the religion of this sacred land of India, is the oldest of the faiths extant in the world. It reached the plenitude of its glory at a time when Egypt, Babylon, Assyria and Greece, the ancient seats of civilization, were only in their infancy. But the word 'Hinduism' is a misnomer, inasmuch as the actual word from which this appellation originated was 'Sindhu.' In ancient Persian (i.e. the language of the Parsees) the Sanskrit letter 'S' invariably changed into 'H,' and the Persians applied the word 'Hindu' to the river Sindhu. Thus 'Hinduism' became the name of the religion professed by the inhabitants living on 'the other side of the river Sindhu.' Subsequently, the Greeks finding it hard to pronounce the letter 'H' dropped it altogether and the Hindus came to be commonly designated as 'Indians.' Thus the name Hinduism has since then been used to signify the religion of the Indians as a whole. But under the present altered circumstances India is not the homeland of the Hindus alone, but of the Jains, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Christians and Mohammedans as well, and the word 'Hinduism,' strictly speaking, cannot be applied as

a common name for the religion of all the Indians today. As a matter of fact, by Hinduism is meant the faith of those who hold the Vedas, the most ancient literature of the Indo-Aryans, as the supreme authority in all religious matters. Hinduism as such may, in all fairness, be called the religion of the Vedas or Vedāntism.

The Vedas are four in number, viz. the *Ṛig-Veda*, *Yajur-Veda*, *Sāma-Veda* and *Atharva-Veda*. Each of these Vedas has three main divisions, namely the *Samhitās* (Collections of hymns, sacrificial formulas and litanies), the *Brāhmaṇas* (prose texts containing theological matter, descriptions of sacrificial rites and modes of their performance), and the *Āraṇyakas* (forest books, i.e. that part of the *Brāhmaṇas* which was taught to those who observed particular vows on the occasion). The Upanishads are mostly different chapters of these *Āraṇyakas* excepting the *Īśa* which forms the fortieth and last chapter of the white *Yajur-Veda* (the *Vājasaneyi Samhitā*). In fact the Vedas fall into two distinct classes (according to the nature of the themes treated therein), namely, the *Karma-kāṇḍa* and the *Jñāna-kāṇḍa*—the former dealing with the performance of rituals and the latter with knowledge. These Upanishads, otherwise called the *Vedānta* (the end of the Vedas), are said to be one hundred and eight in number. These not only are the store-house of the oldest Indian philosophy—the accumulated wisdom of the saints and sages, but contain a graphic account of the various forms of meditation (*upāsana*) on God, soul and the universe.

With the march of time the different schools of priests and singers gave their own readings to their respective Vedas, and the Vedic literature, vast as it is, came to be divided into innumerable branches called *śākhās* (i.e. the slightly diverging recensions of one and the same *Samhitā*). Thus the *Ṛig-Veda* has 21 *śākhās*, *Yajur-Veda* 109 (and according to some, 100), *Sāma-Veda* 1000, and *Atharva-Veda* 15 (and according to some, 3); but ninety per cent. of these branches (*śākhās*) are now lost either owing to the cataclysm of the Buddhistic age or through the natural process of extinction of those Brahmin families who were the custodians of these sacred books.

Hinduism with all its sparkling variety of forms covers such a wide range of human thought that volumes can be written on the subject; but in view of the limited time at our disposal, only the striking peculiarities are presented in a nutshell for an easy comprehension of the central theme of this religion:—

(1) Hinduism is based on eternal principles which do not depend upon or originate from the life and teachings of any particular saint or seer. On the other hand, God-men and Prophets are born in this religion from time to time only to illustrate them in their own lives and thereby encourage a thousand others to follow in their footsteps. Thus the principles of Hinduism are eternal truths which reveal themselves to the spiritual vision of the blessed ones who hanker after God-realization.

(2) Its spirit of tolerance and universal acceptance of all faiths stand unparalleled in the history of mankind. Hinduism does not hold any truth to be the exclusive possession of any particular religion. It believes in the validity and usefulness of all existing faiths inasmuch as the same truth can be approached and realized in different ways through the medium of these divergent religions. Far from viewing other faiths with disdain and suspicion, Hinduism has respect for every system of thought and looks upon all as so many paths leading eventually to the realization of the supreme end of human existence. That the followers of this faith kept its door open to the various other religions that took shelter in this land from time to time, and allowed them full freedom for growth and expansion according to their distinctive traits and even encouraged mosques and churches to be built side by side with their own temples, speak highly of its wonderful spirit of tolerance and acceptance. Hinduism, in a word, means a living universal faith—a faith that accepts and tolerates all creeds and all systems of thought. But it would be a mistake to suppose that it is an artificial eclecticism. It is on the other hand a dynamic religion that sustains every faith with its life-giving principles, that never believes in proselytization but in vitalization of all beings without any distinction whatsoever.

(3) Unlike many other living religions of the world, Hinduism prescribes innumerable paths for men for the attainment of the highest goal of life. It holds that the means to the realization of the truth are as many as there are human beings. For, no two persons on earth can be found exactly alike in their make-up, intellectual, moral or spiritual. From Absolutism down to fetishism, from the highest philosophy of the *Advaita Vedānta* down to image-worship, each and all have, as such, a place, in Hinduism. There may be sects, but no canker of sectarianism in this religion, and, to say the least, fanaticism born of ignorance and crass superstition is outside the sacred pale of this universal faith of the Hindus.

(4) Whenever necessity arises, some seraphic souls are born in this religion to render inestimable service unto humanity by their marvellous life and teachings. The history of Hindu religion gives a graphic account of a splendid galaxy of saints and sages, seers and seekers after truth who were born on the soil of India in fulfilment of the imperious demands of the different ages.

The Hindu scriptures hold that a man is but an epitome of the universe. So, whatever is true of the macrocosm is also true of the microcosm, and as such the two contending forces of good and evil which are always found to be at work in these phenomena of nature are also to be found in man. In popular terms they are called love and hatred. Love is attraction and hatred is repulsion. When evil predominates and virtue subsides (in other words when good is overpowered by evil) we witness at the crest of humanity a superman standing in our midst with all the wealth of his spiritual realizations to re-adjust and re-establish the lost balance once more on the material and spiritual planes. It was in keeping with this universal law of nature that a little over a century ago, a saint of the first magnitude was born in the person of the poor Brahmin boy of Kamarpukur, who in the fullness of time came to be known as Sri Ramakrishna—the saint of Dakshineswar.

The history of Hindu religion of more than a hundred years back is the history of a period of threefold transition—social,

political and religious. The religious India of the early nineteenth century was torn with the doubts and disbeliefs of agnostics and sceptics. It was an age when the spirit of religion was almost stifled by the octopus of religious rites. Hinduism at this hour was ridden with priestcrafts and caste-prejudices. Sectarianism and fanaticism ran rampant in the land. Social disorder or *debacle* and political serfdom of those days conspired, as it were, to make the situation worse. The establishment of British rule wrought in its turn a radical change in the outlook of social and religious life of India. A few years of British rule were enough to capture the imagination of the leading sons of the soil. Influenced by the materialistic philosophy of the West they began to see things through the eyes of Europe. And very soon these neo-cultural forces began to fill the atmosphere of Indian life with the miasma of atheistic thoughts, mutual hatred and jealousy. To crown all, the Hindus lost all faith in the beauty and greatness of their cultural heritage, and their scriptures—the storehouse of the accumulated wisdom of the saints and seers—were looked upon by the reformed zealots as bundles of so many contradictions and meaningless practices. Indeed the life of India did never reach such a low level before ; never did it so seriously need the advent of mighty spiritual figures to restore it back to its pristine glory. To fulfil the crying need of the age a host of fiery personalities sprang up in the land, who tried their level best to stem the tide of this silent cultural conquest and thereby to avert the impending catastrophe in the collective life of the people.

But, of these builders of unity, none was so singularly successful in his attempts as the saint of Dakshineswar whose advent into the arena of Indian life was a veritable challenge to all that was alien to the spiritual genius of the people. His life from its start to finish was a life of intense *sādhana* and splendid realizations. He went through all forms of religious practices enjoined in the sixty-four Tantras and other scriptures of the Hindus, and in an incredibly short period of time he was able to realize the supreme truths embodied therein. But this was not all. To realize the fundamental unity of all faiths he devoted himself to the practice of other religions—Islam and Christianity

in particular, and came to the conclusion that every faith is a path to the realization of the highest Reality—call it God or Brahman, Allah or Ahura Mazda, Jin or Jehova. The fire of Sri Ramakrishna's *sādhana* not only brought back new life to the dead bones of Hinduism but threw a flood of new light upon all other existing faiths of the day. The tide of Indian life was thus changed, and Hinduism has since then been freed from the tentacles of modern pragmatic philosophy imported from the West. In short Ramakrishna's life of *sādhana* has revived the principles of Hinduism and established it once again on the *terra firma* of its majesty and glory.

The present is an echo of the past and a presage of the future. Hinduism of today which has brought a new hope, a new life and light to one and all irrespective of caste, creed or colour, promises a bright and glorious future. And it would not be an exaggeration to say that, in the light of the life and gospel of Sri Ramakrishna who was a symphony of a thousand faiths and voices of mankind and in whom Vedāntism found its highest and noblest fulfilment, Hinduism will serve as the solvent of the manifold problems of the day and bring eternal solace and comfort to the millions of souls thirsting for spiritual peace. Hinduism of tomorrow is therefore nothing short of a mighty confluence where the divergent streams of faiths bereft of all the turbid accretions of fanaticism, jealousy and narrowness of vision, will meet in sweet cordiality without even losing their distinctive ideal and identity, and would receive in their mutual commingling a fresh accession of strength and vigour for the betterment of human life and thought.

May the followers of this oldest of faiths be conscious of the sacred blood they inherit, the blood of the Aryans of the most ancient ages—the blood of the saints and seers which is still coursing through their veins. May their life like unto that of their glorious forbears, both individual and collective, be a sacrifice at the altar of the welfare of humanity.

Peace, Peace, Peace be unto all.

RELIGION, SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

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While discussing the problems and methods of futuristic reconstruction in the domain of religion it would be quite worth while to orient ourselves to some of the factual and objective realities in the modern religions of the world. The most outstanding fact of the present day is to be found in the remarkable progress of mankind in the religious consciousness. The growth and expansion of liberalism, toleration and wide-awakeness have to be recognized as some of the profoundest ingredients in the actual religious behaviour and sentiments of nations. Mankind is today more religious, more tolerant, more spiritual and more appreciative than it ever was.

Even half a century ago, say, about the time that the Parliament of Religions was convened at Chicago (1893), the Christian was exclusively a Christian and hardly anything else. During those days the Moslem was likewise merely a Moslem and a Moslem only. It was difficult, nay, impossible for him to be at the same time something other than Moslem. The psychological attitudes of the Hindu were similar. The Hindu was nothing but Hindu.

But in the course of the last fifty years the religious ideologies and orientations of men and women in the East and the West have undergone a considerable transformation. Today the Christian Bible is quoted in season and out of season by the Buddhists, the Zoroastrians, the Moslems and the Hindus. The Chinese *Taote-ching* and the Indian *Gītā*, on the other hand, constitute the daily food of hundreds of thousands of Germans, French, Italians, Englishmen and Americans. And the Hindus are likewise inclined to cite verses from the *Koran* in the interest of their day-to-day moral life. The appreciation of other peoples' faiths, sacred books and inspiring messages constitutes the most abiding fact in the psycho-social "*milieu*" of the last generation or so. The Hindu has grown into the Christian and the Moslem, just as the Christian

and the Moslem have grown into the Hindu. Without formal conversion or even consciousness as to the fact of the change the silent absorption of other faiths by men and women in the different corners of the globe is a stupendous reality of the modern religions.

The second great reality is to be observed in the methods by which this tremendous transformation—this mutual conversion on an international scale—has been consummated. The Christian has deliberately and self-consciously chosen to translate and assimilate the non-Christian texts for his own moral and spiritual expansion. The attempts of the Hindu to imbibe life-building forces from the non-Hindú world are no less deliberate and purposive. And so on with the Confucianists, Mussulmans, Buddhists, Zoroastrians and others.

The process seems to be confined formally to the literary, aesthetic, nay, archaeological, philological, and anthropological fields. But the impact of these innocent intellectual and scientific interests on the religious and deeply spiritual foundations of the investigators, researchers and scientists and on large groups of their countrymen has been revolutionary. The Christian has been trying in a conscious manner to change his tradition, modify his society and transform his past, and add something new to his inheritances. In the Hindu world also the efforts to improve upon the past, the society, and the tradition and to re-create the moral and social surroundings, are equally patent.

During all these years mankind has been functioning both in the East and in the West as the re-creator of its heritage. It is the purposive, goalful and self-determined initiative of individual men and women endowed as they are with creative intelligence and will that has been prominent in 'the psycho-social remakings of recent years. Man has been rising to the full stature of his spiritual being by refusing to allow the society and the tradition, embodying as they do the past, to shape the destiny of the present generation. On the other hand, man has been trying to demolish the tradition, the society and the past and shatter them to pieces or rather enrich them with the new creations of his self-conscious personality. The region, the climate, the race, the historic legacy,

the custom and the tradition have therefore been retiring more and more into the background of religious institutions and conduct and are being replaced by the experiments, assimilations, absorptions, discoveries and inventions of today. It is the enormous expansion of man's individuality and creativeness that is responsible for the transformation of the society and the tradition in Christendom as much as in Hindustan, China and the rest of the world. And in the interest of further progress in matters religious we should have to build on these demonstrable realities of the expansion in liberalism and toleration consummated up till now.

It is very necessary to be reassured of this triumph of the human spirit. The fact that even in the epoch of technocracy and industrialism mankind has known how to assert its creative might and rise above the region, the social bonds and the racial limitations should furnish us with tremendous incentives in regard to the socio-religious planning of the world and the spiritual remaking of humanity for today and tomorrow. The new forms that the human *psyche* has assumed in modern times entitle us to the hope that the world is now in for an epoch of rejuvenation.

CHRISTENDOM'S NEED OF CHRIST

PROF. GILBERT SLATER

Oxford University, England

Nineteen hundred years ago the Founder of the Christian religion was crucified as a criminal in Jerusalem, under the law of the Roman Empire. Within five centuries afterwards a religion which professed to be what the Christ had preached had prevailed against all opposition, triumphant over bitter persecution, so completely that the Emperor of the still united Empire was fain to become a convert in order to maintain his power, and to make "Christianity" the official religion of all the civilized countries west of Afghanistan.

But what is "Christianity"? Who was "Christ"? What did he preach?

With regard to the first question little is known beyond dispute. But it is reasonably certain that he came of peasant stock, and probable that he was the son or stepson of the carpenter of Nazareth, a large village in Galilee, the northern province of Palestine, a halting place for travellers from the Mediterranean shore to the upper Jordan valley. His name comes down to us as *Iesous* which is the Greek transliteration of an Aramaic name pronounced *Yeshua*, according to Hebrew scholars, and which is further altered to *Jesus* in English. It is also practically certain that his followers were convinced that he died on the Cross, and then miraculously came to life again to sit ever afterwards on a throne in the sky, as the supreme Lord of the universe, and that the explanation of his whole life and resurrection was that he was an incarnation of the Hebrew God Yahveh (Jahveh or Jehovah), as Kṛishṇa of Vishṇu. This belief was embodied in creeds which have remained up to the present day official statements of the doctrines of all the great organized Christian Churches, Greek, Roman, Syrian, Anglican, and Protestant. Whether it is true, or whether his supposed appearance to his followers as a living man were illusions, or whether he was taken down from the Cross while actually alive, are much disputed questions with which I am not here concerned. Whether the belief in Jesus' miraculous resurrection were true or mistaken, there can be no doubt that it generated the force that enabled Christianity, starting as a small Jewish sect, to spread and conquer, under the guidance of a succession of notable leaders.

Of these the first was St. Paul, previously Saul of Tarsus, probably a wealthy young man, since he inherited the status of a Roman citizen, who forsook his possessions to give his life to preaching his own particular version of Christian doctrine to non-Jewish people. His inference from the supposed fact of the Resurrection was that the faithful followers of Jesus would also ascend into heaven and lie in bliss for ever. In his time Christians confidently expected that Jesus would come back to judge all human beings alive or dead, while some at least of those who had known and followed him during his lifetime were still alive, and then the living would enter into bliss without ever dying.

and the remainder, with all other dead people, would rise from their tombs, and also enter into everlasting bliss. This was the faith that enabled them to defy the power of the State, so that the sufferings of the Christian martyrs became the seed of the Christian Church.

There was a critical time for the early Church when this expectation was visibly falsified by the course of events, but the danger was warded off by the timely appearance of the book known as the *Gospel according to St. John*, which developed and laid stress upon another early Christian belief, which I can only vaguely describe as a belief in the existence among Christians of a spiritual emanation from the Supreme Deity, termed the Holy Ghost, a guide, strengthener and consoler of all faithful Christians, who would be with them at all times, until the second coming of the Incarnate Deity in the person of the crucified Jesus of Nazareth. This doctrine was also accepted by the whole Church.

So much uniformity of belief did not, however, prevent violent quarrels among believers about minor matters of belief, prosecuted at times with savage cruelty—quarrels which could not be resolved, because they turned on questions on which nobody really knew or could know anything.

When we turn from the question "Who was Christ?" to the question "What did he preach?" the reliable information is sufficiently ample. His theology was simple. He believed in the existence of a Supreme Deity, the Creator of the Earth and its supposed subsidiary satellites, the Sun, Moon and Stars, fixed (i.e. true Stars), and wandering (i.e. planets). Living, as he did, in what was in his time a fertile and beautiful land, rich in wild flowers and vines, olives and figs, and other fruit trees of numerous varieties, he felt that the attributes of this unnamed deity were rightly indicated by the phrase "Our Father in Heaven," so that his theological doctrine is correctly described as a belief in the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of Man. But he also believed in the existence of a hostile power, whom he termed "The Evil One," named Satan, perpetually at work endeavouring to thwart the goodness of God by corrupting the hearts of men. Exactly

what he believed about his own relationship with the Heavenly Father is a matter of dispute, but the balance of the available evidence is in favour of the opinion that he believed that he was not merely a son of God in the same sense as all other human beings, but also in some special sense, by virtue of which he was able, better than any other man, to realize his sonship, and interpret the will and nature of the Heavenly Father to his brethren, if any of them would listen to his teaching.

That teaching was only slightly and incidentally theological, it was mainly and emphatically ethical, and was embodied in what is known as the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Prayer, and certain parables, particularly those known as the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, and the Sheep and the Goats, which we have reason to believe have come down to us only inappreciably altered from his actual pronouncements, either because they were put on record by the hearers in the book known as 2, now lost but used as a source by Matthew and Luke, in the first and third gospels, or in the case of the parables, because their literary form and poetic quality made them live in men's memories.

The wonderful and unique fact about that teaching is that it is exactly the opposite of what one would infer from observing the practice of the great majority of those who profess themselves to be Christians. Gandhi has told us of his astonishment when, after having formed his ideas of the essential features of the Christian religion from his observation of Christians, he read the Sermon on the Mount, and discovered that its doctrine was in harmony with his own belief. Actually Gandhi though not a Christian is the foremost living exponent and exemplar of the religion taught by Jesus of Nazareth, and believers in re-incarnation might well believe that the soul of Jesus was reincarnated in him. Thus Gandhi's doctrine of *ahimsā* was preached by Jesus in such words as these—

“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who use you spitefully—Give to everyone who asks of you—as you would that others should do to you give likewise to them.”

He believed that it was his mission to establish on earth the "Kingdom of Heaven," that is a Brotherhood willing to welcome all men, women and children, loving one another, and endeavouring to act in accordance with the will of a Divine Father, Who regards all living beings as His children, and pities and cares for them without distinction. The prayer which he taught his disciples to address to their "Father in Heaven" set before them as their first aim in life the establishment of this great Brotherhood, in which men should meet injuries by forgiveness instead of by resentment, and for themselves ask for nothing beyond "daily bread." To those who desired riches, he said that such a wish was foolish ("Blessed are the poor, woe to you rich") and impious, "You cannot serve God and Mammon." To use a modern phrase, he preached voluntary communism, and after his crucifixion his disciples, while still under the sway of his intense personality, made voluntary communism the rule of the little communities which they established, first in Jerusalem, and later in many other cities. Though the rule of absolute community of goods was relaxed, these little communities (called "Churches") continued to be local organizations for mutual help among their own membership; each also ready to help other churches in time of distress. These rules of brotherhood and mutual help Jesus made absolute. "Not every one who says to me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that does the will of my Father who is in Heaven." To those who do not, however active they might be in church affairs, he would say "Depart from me, I never knew you."

That the teaching of Jesus is little honoured in reality by so-called Christian nations, and even by the dignitaries of the great organized Christian Churches, is a glaring fact, so glaring, indeed, that many whose aims and lives have been most in accordance with his have repudiated Christianity and have been denounced as atheists.

But how did this lamentable divergence come about? It began about thirty years after the Crucifixion. In A. D. 64 there was a terrible fire in Rome, which destroyed great areas in that city where the fragile huts of the poorer classes were huddled

together, and no doubt, hundreds of houses of the well-to-do. It was probably accidental, so far as its immediate origin was concerned, but its anterior cause must have been the corruption of the elaborate system of city government under the influence of greatly augmented wealth and greed as the fortunes of the great merchants and money lenders assembled in the Imperial City were swollen by profits and interests flowing thither from all parts of the over-grown Empire. The populace, homeless and destitute, frantic and revengeful clamoured for victims. They were found in the new, but rapidly growing community of Christians, whose democratic and communist practices were obnoxious to the corrupt plutocracy. They were accused of having set the city on fire, and allowed no opportunity of defending themselves against the false charge, they were hunted out, and murdered in various ways, notably by being burnt alive, so as to suffer a similar fate to that which they were accused of inflicting on their fellow-citizens.

The reaction of this calamity was most disastrous to spirit of Christianity. Jesus meant his religion to be purely a religion of love ; actually, the pressure of this first persecution, followed in succeeding time by many more, converted Christianity into a religion of hate as well as of love, of love to all within its scanty membership, of hatred to hosts of those outside. Retaliation indeed was not possible, retaliation in thought was the more savage. Even if those who were burnt at the stake could bring themselves to forgive their torturers, their friends and relatives could not. They set their imagination to construct even worse tortures for " the wicked "—their immortal souls were to undergo those tortures with no remission, no place for repentance, for ever and ever. And it was the all-loving Heavenly Father Who as they believed created this hell, and inflicted those horrors, worse than ever man, the cruellest of all living creatures, had ever inflicted on his fellows. The cruelty of such a God generated similar cruelty in his worshippers. Worse was still to follow. When the Christian Church split into rival sections, disputing over insoluble questions of theology, each separate sect was ready to prophesy everlasting torment to the adherents of every other

sect, and to reserve the expectation of everlasting bliss exclusively for its own adherents. They alone were the elect, the chosen ones, who ultimately owed their Election to "Grace," that is to the special favouritism to them of the all-just, all-powerful, all-loving Father of all!

Under the influence of such teaching, the "Christian" nation of the West of Europe combined under the impulse of their priests to wage the savage Wars of the Crusades against the more civilized and humane Mohammedans, and later created an organization for searching out the "unbelievers," such as the Jews and Mohammedans, living in their midst, and also the "unorthodox," and put them to death by torture. Thus even in London in the sixteenth century Roman Catholics burnt Protestants at the stake as "heretics," and Protestants hanged Catholics, and tore out their entrails before they were quite dead, as "traitors."

Even now the doctrine of everlasting hell lingers on, poisoning the minds of all who submit to the teaching of the priests. A less rapid but equally disastrous decay ate into the vitality of the other great ethical doctrine taught by Jesus, that of the need of ceasing to desire superfluous riches, after the conversion of the Emperor Constantine and the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Empire. Then it paid to become a nominal Christian, and those who aimed at power and wealth rushed to become converts, and intrigued for advancement into positions of authority in the church organization. The Empire, under pressure of barbarian invaders, split into an Eastern Empire with Constantinople as its capital, which maintained its existence up to 1455 in which the Christian Church retained its material prosperity while becoming spiritually corrupt, and the Western Empire, where the old capital of Rome was captured and ravaged by the "heathen" a thousand years afterwards and the power of the Emperors dwindled away. There the Church, organized under the Pope of Rome, deemed the Vicar, or Viceroy, of Christ, took up the task of rescuing the remnants of the ancient civilization, and of exercising a spiritual domination over the minds and consciences of the northern invaders.

Here there was a partial and temporary return to the ethical

standards of the earliest Christians, and renewed attention was paid to the social teaching of Jesus. It was recognized that both slavery and private property in land were contrary to his spirit, but both had become so firmly rooted in the social structure that the Church had to compromise. It made increasing efforts to abolish chattel slavery, arguing that "those whom Christ had bought with his precious blood must not be bought and sold by other men," but permitted, and even made profit out of, the forced labours of poor peasants. It permitted the inequality of the rich and the poor, but preached the necessity of almsgiving, and insisted on demanding lives of self-sacrifice, at least to the extent of abstinence from marriage of its priests.

But in proportion as it succeeded in re-establishing the rule of law and order, and trade and manufacture, and profits of trade and manufacture, corruption and decay of spiritual life again made headway. The assumption of responsibility for the revival of civilization by the papacy, i.e. by the organized Christian clergy, gave it power and authority. That authority was supported by a new system of spiritual punishment supplementing the conception of hell, the threat of which could only be used in the most extreme cases. This was purgatory, a place of finely graded temporary torments, where every revolt in deed or thought was visited with its appropriate and severe penalty.

Purgatory, in the teaching of the Church, became increasingly horrible, but it was the only way to heaven for all but the saintliest Christians.

Responsibility thus brought power and the possession of power gave the control of wealth, as soon as there was a surplus over the bare necessities of life to be scrambled for. Wealth again produced luxury, and luxury greed. Papal Rome became, like Imperial Rome, the centre to which the tribute of all the nations that were under its sway was drawn by an elaborate system of clerical taxation; and Rome again a city where everything was for sale, including the remission of any number of years of purgatory.

Nemesis came at last. Men's consciences revolted against

the corruption of the Church, and their minds against its intellectual tyranny; while its wealth and luxury excited the envy and greed of landowning and mercantile magnates. North of the Alps the combination of these forces carried through the "Protestant Reformation," which became effective and permanent in establishing new religious organizations where it was supported by the princely governments. Horrible religious wars ensued, in which it is estimated that *two-thirds* of the population in Germany alone perished by slaughter, famine, and pestilence.

Whether these new "Protestant Churches" or the Roman "Catholic Church" approximated more in their practice to the teaching of Jesus, is a question which is hotly debated between their respective adherents, and one on which it is very difficult to form an impartial opinion. England was saved from the worst horrors of the conflict by the policy of Queen Elizabeth and the natural genius for compromise of the English people. The national Church was recognized on the basis of Royal supremacy, and on a blending of Catholic and Protestant creeds and ritual. Nevertheless civil war did ensue, in which the more extreme Protestants inspired a revolt of the mercantile classes against the monarchy on the ground that they must not be taxed, however moderately, without the consent of their representatives in Parliament. When the conflict ended at the close of the seventeenth century it became clear that (1) the "Christian" Established Church had become in effect a subordinate department of the Government, and (2) whatever that Government might be represented officially as being, or be in form or in popular belief, it was in reality the tool of the plutocracy. It was dominated right through the eighteenth century and the fresh half of the nineteenth by the wealthy parasitic landlord class, and later, to an increasing degree, by the chieftains of capitalism, manufacturers, traders, bankers, Company promoters, proprietors of newspapers, ship-builders, munitioners, and the like, supported by an ever-growing body of small and medium folk living, with little or no labour, on incomes derived from investments.

In consequence the nominal Christian Churches in England became in reality the servants of Mammon, and not of the

Heavenly Father. In words they declared that Jesus was the all-wise, all-good, and almighty God, but, in the mass, treated his recorded teaching as foolish and negligible, and altogether inapplicable to actual life, either public or private.

What is true of England in this respect is largely true of America, Germany, and Western Europe also; with what horrible results became apparent in one war for markets and areas for capitalist expansion and exploitation after another, between "Christian" Powers, from the Anglo-French war at the beginning of the eighteenth century up to the "Great War" of the twentieth, which left behind a legacy of mutual hatred which daily becomes more intense and ominous, and now threatens Europe with a more horrible fate than ever experienced by humanity yet—its wealthy and crowded cities are in imminent danger of being destroyed by explosive and incendiary bombs, their inhabitants murdered wholesale by torturing and poisonous gases, their water supplies destroyed, their food supplies disorganized, so that those who escaped from one death would perish by millions from hunger and thirst.

All this danger would disappear, all this horrible prospect would be transformed into a future of unprecedented health, happiness and prosperity, if only professed Christians would obey the commands of Christ. These are now proved to be the dictates also of honest common sense. There is the easy possibility of plenty of every desirable commodity for everybody, if only we were all willing to demand no more than our fair share of the produce of industry in proportion to our needs, and to contribute our fair share of the necessary labour in proportion to our powers, living together, as Jesus would have us live, as brothers, helpful and sympathizing with one another in all fortune, good and bad.

That is Christendom's Need for Christ Today.

What hope is there that Christendom will recognize that need, and at long last follow the leadership of Jesus?

It looks but a slight hope at present, but we must not forget that among all Christian sects there have been men and women, mostly poor and obscure, who have been willing to devote their

lives to the pursuit of genuine Christian ideals, and others, also, outside those sects, who have fought with them for social justice and mercy, though they repudiated Christian theology. They refused to call Jesus "Lord, Lord," and are termed 'atheists and deemed wicked by those who are conspicuous in their attendance in the Churches, like the Pharisees of old, not realizing the application today of the parable of the sheep and the goats, in which Jesus declared that in the last day he would repudiate them, and welcome as comrades those "atheists" who, like Robert Owen a hundred years ago and certain of our fellow-citizens today, are striving to "cast down the mighty from their seats, and lift up them of low degree."

Our hope rests upon the fact that while the organized Churches, wealthy and endowed, and in alliance with nationalistic and plutocratic governments, have betrayed Christ, still hosts of the rank and file of professed Christians are still loyal to his teaching, particularly among the poor and simple. One poor woman who works as a domestic servant next door to me, said a day or two ago, "When I was a child, my mother taught us that religion was trying to help other people." That is true Christianity. The words of Jesus, and his example and personality, still find an echo in many—an echo in many Christian hearts, and still live as a fountain of neverceasing inspiration. Christendom needs the spirit of Christ, and now, when Archbishops and Bishops deplore what they regard as the decay of religion, it is beginning more fully to realize that need. Therein lies the only hope of its rescue from the perils which the Church's betrayal of Christ has brought upon "Christendom." It must return to Christ.

THE HUMAN FACTOR IN THE FORMATION OF CAPITAL

PRESIDENT F. ZAHN, LL.D., PH.D.

Statistical Institute, Bavaria

The people themselves with their capabilities for living and work form the most important productive factor of an economic

national unit. The capital expended by the people for training and education is three to four times as large as the dead capital. 80 to 90 per cent. of the total income of a nation is the direct production of human work; the rest is the interest on invested capital, rents and leases, all of which may also be considered the production of human work, as capital is only the crystallized work of former economic periods. For the economic maintenance of a nation each generation must pay back the capital in full including interest, which was used for training and education, by producing a new hereditarily healthy generation. The misdirection of living national capital is much more dangerous than the misdirection of a dead capital by over-rationalization, and this might be done by over-education. The economic importance of the age structure of a nation is to be seen best in social insurance. A successful hygienic campaign against infant mortality might save 10 billions in needless expenditure ; a decrease in the number of births for even one year as compared with the years before the war means a loss of 20 billions. Population policies must be made use of to protect the substance of the nation. (*Epitomized from the original in German.*)

PART V

OBSERVATIONS AND FAREWELL



View of the Dais during the afternoon session of the Parliament held at the Calcutta
Town Hall on Thursday, March 4



The Gathering at the Calcutta Town Hall, March 4

CHAPTER VIII
OBSERVATIONS

MONDAY, THE 1ST MARCH, 1937, AFTERNOON

OPENING OF THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS
ELECTION OF GENERAL PRESIDENT

SIR BRAJENDRA LAL MITTER, *Member, Executive Council, Government of Bengal*:

I have the honour to move that Sir Brajendra Nath Seal be elected General President of the Parliament of Religions. In the world of letters and philosophy, Dr. Seal's name is so well known that very few words are necessary to introduce Dr. Seal to this distinguished gathering. I may, however, mention a matter of peculiar significance. This Parliament of Religions has been convened under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Centenary. Dr. Seal had personal contacts with the Saint of Dakshineswar and he was an intimate friend of Sri Ramakrishna's most distinguished disciple Swami Vivekananda. Dr. Seal has earned a very big name as the wise man of the East, and we may feel confident that under his guidance the deliberations of the Parliament will be conducted on a high spiritual level. I commend my motion to the acceptance of this conference.

HIRENDRA NATH DATTA, *Attorney-at-Law*:

I have much pleasure in seconding the motion that has been so eloquently moved by my distinguished friend Sir B. L. Mitter. Not many words are needed to commend this motion to your acceptance. It is in the fitness of things that Sir Brajendra Nath Seal, the *doyen* of Indian philosophers, who has made the whole range of knowledge his own and who moves daily among all the great religions of the world, should be the General President of this mammoth gathering. I commend the motion that has been so ably moved to your cordial and enthusiastic acceptance.

SIR BRAJENDRA NATH SEAL (rising amidst applause):

It is very unfortunate that I have been recently taking ill and I therefore request one of my friends to read out my address. (The printed address was then read.)

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TUESDAY, THE 2ND MARCH, 1937, MORNING

RELIGIOUS UNITY A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS

PROF. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR of the Calcutta University (while presenting his paper on " Religious Categories as Universal Expressions of Creative Personality " ¹):

Religious unity is a contradiction in terms. Unity is such a thing that it can never be approached by the path or paths of religion. On the other hand, religion is such a peculiar item of life that it can hardly ever lead to unity. In other words, religious unity is psychologically as inconceivable as a *sonār pātharer bāṭī* ('golden marble vessel'). It is certainly possible to analyze the religions of the world from the earliest times until today, and I can prove and many people can prove logically as well as psychologically that some of the texts, say, of the Koran are identical with some of the texts of Confucius. Further, some of the teachings of the Upanishads may be demonstrated to be identical with some of the teachings of the New Testament. But these individual phrases do not constitute the *Gestalt* (form-complex) of a religion. It is, however, the *Gestalt* that rules a man's life. Human life is not governed in a simple manner by just one principle or another. There are several principles that together constitute the springs of action. I will give you an illustration. It is possible, for instance, to discover the stones and the gems of the Taj Mahal in many buildings of the world, including, say, the Victoria Memorial of Calcutta. But the Taj Mahal of Agra, as a structural whole, is entirely different from the Victoria Memorial of Calcutta, although the gems, jewels, stones and all sorts of things that you can possibly imagine as necessary for edifices are individually perhaps identical in the two structures.

¹ See Vol. I, page 191.—ED.

Therefore the fundamental proposition for all of us is to accept the doctrine of "*Yata mat, tata path*" (as many faiths so many paths, every faith as a path to God) as the only possible pragmatic basis of inter-human relationships. Ramakrishna, when he declared the equality of paths and the equality of faiths, was voicing the same sentiments of democracy and republicanism to which we are used in the problems of civic welfare and political life. Equality in politics means nothing more than the simple respect for man as man. Nobody on earth can reasonably believe that all human beings were, are and can ever be equal in any significant sense. In the same manner when Ramakrishna declared that every faith is a path to God, he did not want us to understand that every faith is equal to every other faith but that each should be respected. Such a republic of world's religions, the democracy of the religions of man, was never propounded for mankind in this form before Ramakrishna, and we should therefore look upon this dictum as one of the most profound contributions to world peace, taking it for granted all the time that religious unity is a contradiction in terms."

TUESDAY, THE 2ND MARCH, 1937, EVENING

*THE INNER SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PARLIAMENT
OF RELIGIONS*

MADAME SOPHIA WADIA *of Bombay*:

Salutations to Sri Ramakrishna in whose name we have gathered today. I do not feel it will be an indiscretion to take you into my confidence, and state that I was not to speak this evening but was requested to say a few words to you after this afternoon's session had begun. It would have been ungracious and ungrateful not to submit and not to choose immediately some subject to consider for a few moments, and the subject which seemed to us of tremendous importance was the one of 'The Inner Significance of this World Parliament of Religions.' Its outer significance is known to all of us and is clear to us all. What its inner significance will be will depend upon our own

efforts and the change of hearts and the change of attitude which will become ours as we learn from each other and listen to each other, not only with the concentration of our minds but with the sympathy and the understanding of our hearts. One of the messages which was read last evening, the message from India's great leader, Gandhiji, gave us already the idea that each one of us will have to do something to make this Parliament of Religions not only an outer success that it is bound to be, but a true inner success. In sending his good wishes to all of us Gandhiji added, "May this Parliament achieve something constructive." Perhaps it seemed unnecessary to state that we should do something constructive and perhaps some may wonder what more constructive work could we achieve than the one which has already made it possible for all of us to come together on a common platform, to forget for a moment the prejudices and try to understand each other in a true spirit of universal brotherhood.

The inner significance has already been explained by the previous speakers, especially by the one who stated that we lived in this world and therefore identified ourselves with the illusions of the objective world, as also by the last speaker who gave us an exhortation to turn within and announced to us the necessity of understanding the inner side of all things, the inner significance of our own being to begin with. We judge of things or events and actions in terms of the externals. What is wrong with ourselves at the present moment? Why is it that we do not know ourselves as divine and immortal souls? Why do we claim that fraternity must be maintained, that peace must prevail while the world goes on? Because we ourselves evaluate our own duties, our own actions, our words, feelings and thoughts merely in terms of their objective values. To take some simple illustrations: Vain people, men or women, will examine the outward appearance of an individual at the sight of the dress he or she wears or the external appearance, and the same is true of themselves. They also think more of what they appear to others than what they are in reality within themselves. But the soul influence can only be realized, can only be contacted when we throw away the external valuation. What is it that is wrong? Religion today is

a disintegrating and destructive force whereas from time immemorial, as stated in the ancient *Mahābhārata*, *Dharma* or Religion is the unifying power which can link up the whole of the universe in sublime and magnificent unity. That which has happened to religion is what has happened to our own lives in our daily struggle. We think of the outward, and we have forgotten the inward. Religions have become a matter of external ritualistic practices, and the essence is forgotten. The great teachers have pointed out the way and what even the most exalted of saints and sages can do is to point out the way. This Parliament, if more than anything else, has the only purpose and the only objective, i.e. to try to awaken within our own consciousness the recognition that each one of us has to go the path of spiritual realization by his own effort, that we must rely upon ourselves, depend upon ourselves and that it is the earnestness, the purity, the sincerity of our motive in every case which will count. The great ones gave sublime teachings and wonderful inspiration in their own example, in the embodiment of the living truth, but each one of us must make that message in precept and in example part of his own being, must similarly show that living current of spiritual union which has existed and which will continue to exist. Let us therefore unite in the sincere wish to bring our own constructive contribution by our attitude, by our inner understanding, by our desire to learn from each other through this Parliament of Religions, so that its true importance may be increased a thousand-fold by the inner change that will come into the lives of those who have participated in these deliberations, and in that task, those who will listen through silence, through their attention, can give us much and perhaps more than those of us who are coming to the platform to voice some feelings and express some sentiments. Let us remember that self-reliance is happiness, outward dependence is misery, and let us end by invoking upon all of us the blessings of the sages who have been and who will be, those great ones who are for us our spiritual fathers and mothers, more than our physical mother and physical father, those great Rishis who are more than wealth, more than possessions, and who are our true seers and our true Gods.

SRIMAT SWAMI BHAGAVATANANDAJI, *Kāvya-Sāṁkhya-Yoga-Nyāya-Veda-Vedānta-Tīrtha, Vedānta-Vāgīśa, Mīmāṃsā-Bhūṣaṇa, Veda-ratna, Darśanāchārya, Maṇḍaliśvara, Benares:*

(Original in Sanskrit)

‘यो भूतं च भव्यं च सर्वं यश्चाधितिष्ठति । स्वयंस्य च केवलं तस्मै ज्येष्ठाय ब्रह्मणे नमः’ (अथर्ववेद १०।८।१) ।

आयंसद्विचारचतुरीसमञ्चितचित्ताः सन्नाय्यः सत्पुरुषाश्च !

अद्य महीयसो हर्षावेशस्यावसरो यद्वयं विभिन्नदेशनिवासिनो नानामतसिद्धान्त-निबद्धभ्रष्टा अपि पारस्परिकप्रेमप्रसाराय स्वस्वहार्दप्रकाशाय च दूरतरदेशेभ्यो भूयसायासेन समागत्यास्यां संवर्धर्मपरिषदि देवाकृष्टहृदि अवतिष्ठामहे ।

अयं स्पृहणीयः सदैवसरस्तस्यैव परमश्रद्धेयस्य निजचरित्रपवित्रीकृतभारत-धरित्रीतलस्य समुद्ययशस्त्रिद्वकाधवलितदिकूचक्रवालस्य पारेसमुद्रं निवसतां वैदेशिक-चिद्बृहन्महाराजहंसानामपि मानससरोवरायमाणस्य श्रीमतः श्रीरामकृष्णपरमहंसस्यानु-कम्पयाऽलाभ्यस्माभिः । अनेन महात्मना लोकोद्धारचिकीर्षया मतवादिपक्षपातग्रह-पङ्ककलङ्कातङ्कविधुराः सत्यसिद्धान्ताः प्राचारिषत ।

‘एकमेवाद्वितीयम्’ (छा० उ० ६।२।१), ‘ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वम्’ (मुण्ड० उ० २।२।११), ‘ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम्’ (यजुर्वेद ४०।१०), ‘अहं मनुरभवं सूर्यश्च’ (ऋग्वेद ३।६।१५।१), इति वैदिकपद्धत्या जगतीतलगतं सर्वमपि ब्रह्मस्वरूपं परयतोऽस्य महापुरुषस्य सर्वेऽपि जनाः स्त्रीया एव ‘वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्’ इति न्यायेन च ।

एवम्विधानां महामहिम्नामद्भुष्टत्वादयो गुणाः स्वभावसिद्धा एव विलसन्ति, न तेषां कृते प्रयत्यन्ति महात्मानः । यथोक्तं सुरेश्वराचार्यैः—‘उत्पन्नात्मावबोधस्य ऋद्धेष्टृत्वादयो गुणाः । अयत्नतो भवन्त्यस्य नतु साधनरूपिणः’ (नेष्कर्म्यसिद्धिः ४।६६), तथैव श्रीकृष्णेन भगवता च ‘अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च’ (गीता १२।१३), इति ।

न वा महोदारस्य सर्वात्मदर्शिनः सङ्कुचितदर्शिपुरुषवत् कस्मिंश्चित्तुपेक्षा घृणा वा सम्भवति, तदुक्तं श्रीमच्छङ्कराचार्यैः—‘सर्वा हि घृणात्मनोऽन्यदृष्टं परयतो भवति’ (ईशावास्योपनिषद्भाष्यं ६)

‘उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत’ (ऋ० उ० १।३।१४), ‘उत्तिष्ठतावप्रयत’ (अथर्ववेद ७।७।१०),

इत्युद्बोधायितुम् 'एकं ज्योतिर्बहुधा विभाति' (अथर्ववेद १३।३।१७), 'एकं सन्तं बहुधा कल्पयन्ति' (ऋग्वेद १०।१।१४।५), इति सत्यतत्त्वं शिक्षयितुञ्चावतेरुते ।

तैरुपदिष्टं यन्न जातु त्रिदपि केनापि सह विरोद्धव्यम् । सर्वैः सह सद्भावेन भ्रातृभावेन वर्तितव्यमिति । यावन्ति सन्ति मतानि तानि सर्वाण्येव परमोन्नतये पर्याप्तानीति विश्वस्य शान्त्युन्नतिशिखरिशिखरं संमाल्लभ्युभिस्तथैव जीवनं विधानीयम् ।

निखिलनदनदीनां साक्षात्परम्परया वा समुद्र इव सर्वेषां प्राप्यः स एव जगन्निघ्नता जगदीश्वर एवेति परमोदारे विचारे जगतीतले जातप्रचुरप्रचारे सति को नामावसरः पारस्परिकमतवादकलहकोलाहलस्य ।

कतिपयदिवसानन्तरं परस्परतो वियुज्य स्वस्वस्थानं गन्तास्मोऽन्नागता वयं सर्वेऽपि, परमयं वियोगोऽपि संयोग एव सम्पत्स्यते, अत्रत्यभाषणादिना परस्पर-सद्भावबोधेन सञ्जातपरमप्रेमाणोऽभिन्नहृदयाः प्रेमसूत्रावबद्धहृदयतया मोमुद्यमान-मानसाः सन्तो यास्याम इति वियोगोऽपि न दुःखाकरो भवितेति ।

वेदानीं विशिष्याभिज्ञानस्यावसर इति विरम्यते श्रीलरामकृष्णपरमहंसीयगुण-गणार्णववर्णनेन स्वीयवाक्साफल्यं विदधानेन 'वाग्जन्मवैफल्यमसह्यशल्यं गुणाङ्गते वस्तुनि मौनिता चेत् ।' (नेषत्र० ८।३२।) इति श्रीहर्षोक्तिमनुसरता, "सङ्गच्छध्वं सम्वदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानता" वैदिकीं शुभाशंसामाविर्कुर्वतेति इति ।

(*Rendering in English*)

He Who is all that is in the past and will be in the future and on Whom is founded all that exists, to Whom alone belongs the heaven,—to Him, Brahman, the eldest of gods, my obeisance (*Atharva-Veda*, x. 8.1.).

Ye ladies and gentlemen inspired with the spirit of enquiry into the noble problems!

This is a day of great rejoicing that we, though of different countries and different faiths, have assembled together at this convention, even from distant countries, and at the cost of great exertions, in order to cultivate our love and friendship for one another.

This auspicious occasion we owe to the saint Ramakrishna Paramahansa, who by his own personality has sanctified the land

of India, the rays of whose expanding glory have lighted up the whole horizon beyond the seas, and who, besides, is like unto the lake Mānasarovar (favourite resort) to the swans which the foreign scholars living beyond the seas resemble, This great soul, for the deliverance of mankind, preached the doctrines of truth which are absolutely free from all the venalities associated with partisan spirits.

"One without a second (is Brahman)" (*Chhā. Up.*, vi.2.1.); "The Universe is but Brahman" (*Mund. Up.*, ii.2.11); "All is informed with this spirit" (*Yajur-Veda* 40.10.); "I was Manu and Sun as well" (*Rig-Veda*, iii.6.15.1);—such are the Vedic dicta, following which the saint Ramakrishna realized that all in this universe is nothing but Brahman, and he also perceived that all men are kindred, for (to the generous) the earth is full of friends and friends alone.

As such great souls are free from all envy and rancour, such qualities are quite natural to them—without them they would not be great souls. As Sureśvarāchārya has observed: (The qualities like non-envy, etc.) belong only to those whose souls have been awakened, and not who concentrate merely on ascetic practices (*Naishkarmya-siddhi*, iv. 69). Lord Kṛṣṇa has also said: "Inimical to none and full of charity and sympathy for all" (*Gītā*, xii. 13).

Nor is it possible for great generous-hearted men, feeling their own selves in all, to be indifferent or bear hatred towards any one as narrow-minded people are apt to do. As has said Śaṅkarāchārya: "Hatred is born in the minds of those only, who consider others to be vile" (*Īsopaniṣad-bhāṣya*, 6).

The great souls were born on earth as incarnations of God to preach, "Awake and arise" (*Kaṭha Up.*, i. 3.14), "Awake and perceive" (*Atharva-Veda*, vii. 75.7), and to teach, "The one glory manifests itself in various forms" (*Ibid.*, xiii.3.17). "(The seers) imagine the One existent in various forms" (*Rig-Veda*, x. 114.).

They have taught that one should never bear enmity to any one, and that one should always live in harmonious and fraternal relations with all. However many the doctrines that are on earth,

they are all competent to lead us to the highest truth. Keeping this in mind we should try to mould our lives if we really wish to climb to the highest peak of universal peace.

If the noble truth is intensively preached and accepted on this earth, that all faiths directly or indirectly lead to God alone, like rills and rivers meeting ultimately in the ocean, would there be any more room for mutual enmity and recrimination over points of creed?

After a few days we shall again depart to our different places after taking leave of one another. Yet even this farewell will be the foundation of concord, and as the light of love will have been kindled in our hearts, and we shall depart greatly rejoicing over the ties of friendship woven by the addresses delivered here, calculated to promote mutual understanding, even this parting will not be a source of pain to us.

As this is no occasion to go into details, I desist after merely describing the ocean of virtues that is Sri Ramakrishna's, and thereby justifying my gift of speech, for, in the words of the poet Sri Harsha, "the feeling of frustration would be unbearable indeed if, though endowed with the power of speech, one has to remain silent even when confronted with superhuman virtues" (*Naishadha*, viii. 32), and pronouncing at the same time the Vedic benediction—"Assemble in harmony, discuss in harmony, and may your minds be known in harmony."

WEDNESDAY, THE 3RD MARCH, 1937, MORNING

SWAMI PARAMANANDA of *Boston (Mass.) and La Crescenta (Calif.)*,
U. S. A.:

For lack of any other expression I shall call you my spiritual kinsmen. I speak with absolute conviction because we have endeavoured to meet together from various approaches to find unity and find brotherhood; that unity to my mind seems to be the only thing which is practical—practical I say, not because men have tried to express theories or show how it may be worked out, but because I have experienced it. During my travels, specially

once through Austria, I found a man who could not speak to me and I could not speak to him, for we did not know each other's language. And the little French or German I knew did not suffice to communicate with the soul, but the soul did not require a language. And he entertained me as if I were his brother, and because of that, because it is a fact, I am entitled to address you as such. If it were not so, we could never have gathered here and remained here so steadfast. I have sat here in every session and the attention that we are giving to the proceedings proves this—that we are all trying to live the life of the ideal. I have heard many interesting, learned and scholarly expressions of thoughts. They all have expressed the unity of *Dharma*. May I point out that Sri Ramakrishna polished the mirror of his heart. He was seeing in himself the Divine beauty and enabled others to look into the mirror of their hearts. If we now find some blemish in our mirror, we shall take the hint from the practical side of Sri Ramakrishna's life and begin to polish the mirror of our heart and take out all blemishes, and then we shall see whether or not it is possible for us to find the synthesis, idealism, practical reality of which Christ, Buddha and Saint Francis and other great spiritual geniuses have spoken with the living of Truth, with the force of conviction. With this thought I am going to stop. I hope that this convention, this great Assembly which has met in the name of the sacred personage who is still spiritually living with us and whose presence we all feel and but for whom I do not think I would have undertaken a long journey of many many thousands of miles, will give us the spiritual consciousness, and I feel that that reality which Sri Ramakrishna inspired men to realize will be realized even here and now.

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WEDNESDAY, THE 3RD MARCH, 1937, EVENING

THANKS AND APPRECIATIONS

PROF. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR:

On behalf of Young India and on behalf of the Parliament of Religions I rise to say that Rabindranath, the beloved

Rabindranath of Young Bengal, is still young, and continues still to be a profound creator of values. God bless Young India! Rabindranath's address tonight is an immortal document. He has delivered to mankind through this audience a permanent charter of human liberty. It is destined to rank in the world of thought as an eternal manifesto for the enfranchisement of the spirit of man.

THURSDAY, THE 4TH MARCH, 1937, EVENING

SWAMI VIJAYANANDA of the *Ramakrishna Ashram, Buenos Aires (Argentina, South America)*:

I have brought greetings to you from South America—from the Argentine Republic. I was sent there by the Ramakrishna Mission five years back. The result of what I was doing there in these five years was that I was sent back by those Argentine people to represent them in this wonderful Parliament of Religions. I was trying to love them; that is what I can tell you.

There is a great deal of difference between philosophical jargon and real religion. If real religion has any definition, that definition would be "realization." Without realization all religious talk is mere speculation. Whether God is or whether He is not, whether He can be attained or whether He is always beyond our gaze—all these are mere speculations. I ask you all: "Do you feel the necessity of thinking about God?" Whether he is a Christian God, Jewish God, Zoroastrian God, Hindu God or the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha, do you feel the necessity from the bottom of your heart? If not, then all this is in vain. That was what Sri Ramakrishna tried to preach to the world. Whether we stand in the name of *Advaita Vedānta* or *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta*, whether we are followers of Zoroaster or any other, if we do not realize, and first of all, if we do not feel the necessity of realizing, then my friends, we are all far away from the land where religion starts.

In Argentina, there was a tremendous opposition, an opposi-

tion that comes from some people who do not know anything but dogmas and creeds. "Do this and don't do this, do that and don't do that," is their cry. I carried Sri Ramakrishna's message of love. It was very difficult to say who he was, for only a man who can attain that same height of realization as Sri Ramakrishna, can claim to say that Sri Ramakrishna was such and such. I do not understand, so I never told them. But I have brought you their greetings of love.

LITANY ON SRI RAMAKRISHNA

SWAMI PARAMANANDA gave a short address and read out the following Litany of his composition :

O Thou, whose divine radiance kindles
out obscure mind with white light
of faith and hope—

Our homage to Thee a thousand times,
now, and for ever and ever more!

O Thou, whose smile of bliss shines forth
against this world's dark and despondent sky—

Our homage to Thee a thousand times,
now, and for ever and ever more!

Thy whole-souled love for Truth and Truth alone—
A chalice to mankind for ages to come!—

Our homage to Thee a thousand times,
now, and for ever and ever more!

O Thou Conqueror of lust and greed,
indifferent to all human desire!

Fame and shame are same to Thee—
Our homage to Thee a thousand times,
now, and for ever and ever more!

Renouncing Thy precious communion of Bliss,
Thou earnest down to the plane of mortals,
so full of sordidness and sorrow,

To save, perchance, e'en a single soul from drowning—
Our homage to Thee a thousand times,
now, and for ever and ever more!

When our world-soaked thoughts throw their
weight upon our minds,
And our hearts are rent with despair,
Thou comest before us with Thy heavenly compassion—
Thou art grieved that we sorrow—
Our homage to Thee a thousand times,
now, and for ever and ever more!

“ Know ye not that ye are children of All-Blissful Mother?
Grieve not, nor ever make your countenance sad!”—
Thus dost Thou remind us—
Our homage to Thee a thousand times,
now, and for ever and ever more!

Thou dost stand before us as an unfailing lamp,
To guide our steps from the world of men to the
World of God—
Our homage to Thee a thousand times,
now, and for ever and ever more!

Gently like a morning hymn sung by the heavenly choir
Thy face so full of tenderness,
Thy hand so full of saving grace,
Thy heart so full of unearthly love,
Call us forth from our slumber—
Our homage to Thee a thousand times,
now, and for ever and ever more!

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FRIDAY, THE 5TH MARCH, 1937, EVENING
RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

SWAMI VIJAYANANDA:

Friends, Nārada was the most famous among the Rishis.
One day, he was coming back to this mortal plane after visiting

the Lord. He saw three men sitting who asked Nārada what the Lord was doing. Nārada replied, "I saw him passing camels through the eye of a needle." One of them at once stood up and said: "Nonsense! Impossible!!" The other man said, "May be possible." But the third man did not say anything. These are the three types of religious men whom we find in the world. All three try to speak of the Lord. Whether Christian, or Mohammedan or Hindu, all of them say, "Our God is Omnipotent." And each of these three says that his God is the only Omnipotent God. But the first one never practises anything. He has little brain in him. With that he wanted to judge the Omnipotent and said, "Impossible"; for this man could not pass even a little thread through the eye of a needle. The second man who tried many times to practise, said, "May be possible." The third man was one with the Lord and could not say, "Yes" or "No." Friends, religion and philosophy are very close together. The Hindus have a fine word *darśana* for philosophy. *Darśana* is what we *visualize*. We do not speculate about God. We *see* him and our realization is passed on to others. Of course, realization is very difficult to be expressed. So the philosophy that follows the realization comes in a constructive form trying to express the Inexpressible. There is no such word as "impossible." A man who is trying to help his fellow-beings and who is happy in doing that, is a philosopher and religious. But if a man does not feel joy inside or outside a church, and at the same time if he quotes all the books inside the church supporting his view, and outside the church contradicting his views, he is not a religious man. But unfortunately all over the world we find a great majority of philosophers and religious men of this last category. I requested you yesterday and I repeat my request—whatever be the name of your church, whether it is an established church or not, whether it is your own church or not, *do* something and realize. Then you can have a solution of all the philosophies and know the religion.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

ADVOCATE BEJOY KRISHNA BOSE, *Secretary, Centenary Executive*

Committee, made the following announcement regarding the "*Cultural Heritage of India*."

For the last two years and a half, the members of the Ramakrishna Mission and the Centenary Committee have been doing their best to bring about a monumental work, in commemoration of the Centenary,—a work unique in its kind and never attempted before in India,—a volume or a book of volumes in which would appear the writings of the greatest modern scholars of our land, called *The Cultural Heritage of India*. Just now from the press they have sent me these three volumes which have seen the light of day this morning, and I beg to announce to you that you will find in these three volumes the writings from just one hundred great Indian savants. That is a news which I want to communicate to you and it seems to me that the grace of God is upon us, for every item of whatever scheme we had drawn up a year and a half ago, is being fulfilled in the scheduled time.

SATURDAY, THE 6TH MARCH, 1937, MORNING

A MESSAGE OF THE NEW ERA

PRAFULLA KUMAR SARKAR, M.A., B.T., DIP.ED. (EDIN. & DUB.),
Calcutta Training School, Calcutta:

Nothing could be more proper than holding this world federation of faiths in connection with the Centenary of one who invoked the spirit of the New Era in his humble life of dedication, giving to the world an idea of universal religion in a working and up-to-date form.

It may not perhaps be out of place, if I attract your notice to a message for the New Era by Prabhu Jagatbandhu of Faridpur in Bengal.

A living dream in flesh and blood, Jagatbandhu remained unseen and silent for full seventeen years in his secluded retreat at Faridpur, praying and working for the good of the world. Once he declared that the best way of helping in the work of deliverance was to sing the glory of the Lord in congregation,

incessantly producing a peculiar harmony for the whole 'recreating' process.

Jagatbandhu passed away in 1921. But I believe that he is still working for the good of humanity.¹

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SATURDAY, THE 6TH MARCH, 1937, EVENING

GREETINGS FROM THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY

RAI BAHADUR PROF. KHAGENDRANATH MITTER *of the Calcutta University*:

I am very grateful for the opportunity which has been given to me to express on behalf of the Calcutta University, which I have, this evening, the honour to represent, my most cordial greetings to you and particularly to the friends who have assembled here in this great city from different lands. Only recently, I had the opportunity of being present at another Congress of Faiths and I still remember the words that were spoken on that occasion by the representatives of different religions. I had no idea that so soon after that great event, I should have another opportunity of meeting the Assembly of different faiths in our own native land. The experience that I had on that occasion is still fresh in my mind and I think at no time has there ever been a greater need for a meeting of this kind than now, because in all the countries where I have been recently touring, I saw that religion was more dead than alive and there was no chance of infusing fresh blood into the religions which are in a decadent condition. I am confident—and I feel that you will share my opinion when I say—that India has now a message to give to the world, and that message is a message of peace and goodwill not merely in name, but in reality and in substance. Peace and goodwill are conspicuous by their absence in the world of today and there is no immediate prospect of reinstating them from the religions with which we are more or less acquainted. Of course, religion has been pushed to the background and people are trying for something else which is different from what we commonly

¹ This is the substance of a Parliament paper. See Programme, p. 29

understand by religion. God has been removed from His altar, and other gods have been placed on that altar. What are we going to do to the world? As Indians, we feel that in our country there have been apostles and prophets, even today there may be in our country some saints and sages who are incarnations of God. There is no country where renunciation has been preached except in India. There is no country where sages and seers abound in such large numbers as they do in India. My friends, you will pardon me if I say, India will still live to give her message to the world.

SWAMI VIJAYANANDA:

I am going to tell you something of the spreading of the Vedānta and the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna in continental Europe. As you know, Vivekananda himself brought the message of Sri Ramakrishna to Europe and especially to France. He took the trouble to learn the language well enough to deliver a lecture in a similar Parliament of Religions in France. Many of the indologists at that time took a great interest in the message which the Swamiji was bringing from India, but at that time the teachings did not spread beyond a very limited circle of intellectuals. A few years later Swami Paramananda went to Europe and lectured and gave classes in a number of countries especially in Switzerland, but it was really Romain Rolland, one of the most generous hearts which the world has ever known, who really started to spread the message of the Saint of Dakshineswar. The volumes which Romain Rolland published met with tremendous success and were translated in many languages. I was privileged to read many enthusiastic letters which Romain Rolland received from all quarters of the globe after he had published the book. The interest is evinced by the great demand for the actual teachings of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna.

THANKS AND APPRECIATIONS

SWAMI VISHWANANDA of the *Ramakrishna Ashram, Bombay*:

As I have been watching the proceedings of the Parliament of Religions, I could not but admire the capacity of the Calcutta

public to listen patiently to speeches on theological subjects. We are met here and the Parliament has been convened to promote inter-communal amity and inter-racial unity. I do not know whether we shall achieve this ideal. An earnest man like Sir Francis Younghusband, who has devoted his whole attention, would feel disappointed if the result is otherwise. The Hindus think that the wisdom of God is confined in the four Vedas. Probably others think like this. I wish we were all Hindus, and I wish we were all Mussulmans. Then there could be no quarrelling. But there are other forces. Let us try to see the excellence in our neighbour's faith and in all faiths. Every religion has its point of excellence. The Christian Religion has its point of excellence in its ideal of service and prayer. Look at the grand monuments all over the world which the Apostle of Jesus has made for the suffering humanity. Islam has the ideal of democracy and brotherhood. No other religion has so strongly inculcated this idea. Amongst the Muslims you find the lowest and the highest can rise to the same level and to the same rungs of the ladder of life. The question of colour or race does not exist at all among them. I am not going to speak of my own religion lest I should err on the side of arrogance. May God give us sympathetic understanding and enlightenment, so that we may see the best points in our neighbours' faith and may live as members of the same family. Our salutations to all Prophets of the World!

SUNDAY, THE 7TH MARCH, 1937, MORNING

PROF. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR in introducing Madame Adelina del Carril de Guiraldes of Buenos Aires (the Chairwoman of the session).

The Ramakrishna Parliament of Religions has brought far and near together. India has become the venue of cultured persons from the remotest corners of the world. Indians have thereby been enriched with friends of the most diverse nationalities. This morning our session is going to be presided over by a representative of the Republic of Argentina in South America.

The presence of Madame de Guiraldes in our midst is an event of extraordinary importance. For the first time in life many of the culture-bearers of modern India are in direct contact with a creative mind of South America. Argentina, as we all know, is virtually unknown in India in the line of material goods. Argentina touches just a few of India's exporters because she takes from us not very considerable quantities of jute, gunny cloth or gunny bags, raw jute and rice. And our imports of articles from Argentina are so few and far between that they may virtually be ignored. Commercial relations being what they are, the Republic of Argentina has not cared to get herself represented in India by a consul of the Argentinian nationality.

It is in the perspective of this absence of noteworthy intercourse between India and Argentina that we should envisage the significance of Madame de Guiraldes's visit to Calcutta as one of the Presidents of this International Congress. In and through her as ambassador Argentina has exported to India some spiritual goods, the value of which can be fully appreciated in years to come. In her personality we are coming into contact with the great Spanish civilization as naturalized and developed in the huge continent of what is known as Latin America. She is a story-writer and a poet. And it is but natural to expect that the messages of modern India will find in her a fine interpreter for the benefit of the great Spanish-speaking world in Eur-America.

I must not fail to observe that the possibilities of what is likely to be a far-reaching spiritual exchange between India and Argentina or rather the great Spanish civilization of modern times we owe to Swami Vijayananda of Ramakrishna Ashram, Buenos Aires. The sincere thanks of this Parliament of Religions are due to Swami Vijayananda for inspiring Madame de Guiraldes to take the trouble of coming all the way to Calcutta with the object exclusively of giving India and the world a message from the Argentinian people on the meaning of the Ramakrishna celebrations for mankind.

THANKS AND APPRECIATIONS

RAO BAHADUR C. RAMANUJACHARIAR, *Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras:*

The task of proposing the vote of thanks on this occasion has been assigned to me by the *sūtradhāra*¹ of the show. I feel very great pleasure and delight. He has told you at the outset with what amount of sacrifice and with what devotion, our President has come all the way from the Argentine Republic to preside over this function. Our indebtedness is therefore deep and inexpressible. The Ramakrishna spiritual empire is expanding and is all-including. It knows no geographical limitations, nor seeks limitations, and this participation of the President of this morning's function in the deliberations is a singular proof of this fact. Friends, Swami Vivekananda, whom I had known even before he went to the West, was asked why he went to America. He said that the appreciation, approbation and even the adoption of the Vedāntic principles by the West would open the eyes of our own people to the nobility, majesty and greatness of our Vedāntic literature. If 44 years after this was uttered, we find a lady of the Argentine Republic presiding over this function, will that not open our eyes wider, make us more earnest in our endeavour to reach the goal?

SWAMI SHARVANANDA of the *Ramakrishna Mission, Delhi and Karachi:*

It is one of the wisest sayings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna: "The knowledge of unity is true knowledge, the knowledge of duality is ignorance." In these words, he has put in a nutshell the entire philosophy and faith of Hinduism. One of the greatest discoveries that the ancient sages as early as the Rig-Vedic Age made was when they declared—"The whole universe is an organic whole." This declaration of supreme unity of life and existence, in those pre-historic days, certainly made a land-mark, as it were, in the history of the spiritual awakening of mankind, and we find,

¹ Prof. Benoy Kumar Sārkār, a Secretary of the Parliament.

with the progress of time, as human knowledge began to unravel many a mystery of nature through science, through art and literature, and even through different avenues of religion all knowledge began to converge towards that unity. Today in the XX century we know this unity they are trying to find out through physics, chemistry, astronomy, biology, psychology and other branches, and particularly in religion,—the science of religion through a comparative study of religions,—we find that after all at the background of these different expressions of religious faith, there is that one indescribable consciousness of spiritual unity. The spiritual unity was realized in the ancient times in India by the Vedic Rishis. This was declared in China when Lao-Tse spoke of it. This was realized in Athens through Plato and through Aristotle. In Christendom too we find this unity was expressed in the lives of some of the great mystics, and this unity was discovered also by the Sufi mystics. So you see this is a real experience that comes to man in some exalted state of consciousness ; and this unity is the back-ground of all life—this is the back-ground of the physical universe, and any action of ours which only tends to unify us with the Supreme Unity and Universal Life is spiritual, and any action of ours that takes us away from the spiritual unity is called irreligious or unspiritual.

One of the greatest ideals that the ancient sages discovered for the practical life was the ideal of *yajña*. The entire creation proceeded from the sacrifice of the Supreme *Purusha*, and so in the Vedic Ages, the sacrifice was the chief form of communion with the Supreme Being, and this *yajña* is being translated through every institution as domestic and social life of the Hindus—that is, sacrificing the individual or the narrow limited being for the attainment of the Universal Being. This is, in short, the keynote of Hindu civilization ; this is, in short, the key-note of the spiritual attainments of the Indo-Aryan race, and friends, this is going to be really the basis of religious realization, and when we understand the spirit, the spirit of sacrifice, greater would be the real advancement of unity in humanity in the path of civilization. We speak of love and service, but when we try to understand the fundamental philosophy, the ethical philosophy that lies behind

the spirit of love, we come to find the feeling of sacrifice and unity. So this is the *yajña* we have been performing in the form of the Parliament of Religions—to produce the spirit of harmony, to feel the spirit of unity that lies within all of us, i.e., that forms the inner core of our being like a big ocean in which are surging so many billions of waves and pebbles. So the unity of life and the divinity of man form the key-note of all religions, and if we realize this we would feel the doctrine of love and sacrifice truly explained, and its practice would be easier for us and would bring blessing and peace to humanity for which the whole world is hankering. So we should understand the spirit of *yajña* always as an offering on the Altar of Divinity, the *Virāṭ Puruṣha*.

MONDAY, THE 8TH MARCH, MORNING

PROF. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR in introducing the Chairman of the session, Dr. F. V. Tousek, Consul for Czechoslovakia :

One of the first presidents of this Parliament was a scholar from China, Dr. C. L. Chen, Chinese Consul-General at Calcutta. As one of the last presidents we are going to have this morning Dr. F. V. Tousek, the Calcutta Consul for Czechoslovakia. Dr. Tousek is like Dr. Chen a student of law and is deeply interested in social and racial problems. In Dr. Tousek, we have, further, a European who knows his continent from the East to the West at first hand and can speak a number of European languages. The material and moral problems of the poorer classes in all countries have always commanded his attention and interest. This consciousness and sympathy have been an integral part of Dr. Tousek's liberalism and spiritual outfit.

There are special reasons for which the Ramakrishna Parliament of Religions is happy to have a representative of Czechoslovakia as one of the chairmen. Czechoslovakia is a country of small dimensions inhabited by some fourteen million people. It is the smaller countries of Eur-America that should attract the special attention of the Indian people. For, we ought to remember that India, a vast subcontinent as it is, happens in

reality to be a territory of small peoples or nations. The Bengalis, Assamese, Oriyas, Biharis, Punjabis, Marathas, Gujaratis, Andhras, Tamils and so forth of India have perhaps more to learn from the fortunes of lesser nationalities in the modern world than from those of the big nations and the great powers. The problems and achievements of the smaller states are likely to be more easily understood by the different peoples of India than those of large nations. It is not necessary to ignore the great powers but it ought to be a part of our national policy to cultivate contacts with the smaller peoples also in the interest of our cultural progress.

In the second place, the sturdy little republic of Czechoslovakia is a second Switzerland of Europe in technocracy, industrial achievements as well as provisions for social welfare. It is indeed the most modern and up-to-date of all the new states that came into existence about two decades ago.

The cultural and spiritual background of the people represented by Dr. Tousek is also remarkable. The Czechs have the credit and the glory of contributing one of the first great reformers of Christianity or rather one of the first great martyrs of the Reformation in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. That was Huss, the precursor of Luther. One of the greatest embodiments of the Renaissance was the Czech humanist, Comenius. In his pedagogics Europe learned to treat education as an instrument for the service of practical life. In the first half of the nineteenth century romantic enthusiasm in favour of the folk and the spirit of the people got a great fillip through the literary and historical works of Czech intellectuals like Palacky and Havlicek. And in our own times the nationality idea has found a noble and tenacious exponent in the father of Czechoslovakia, President Masaryk, the idealist transformed into the realist, whose *Making of a State* is well calculated to remain the Bible of patriots and publicists of India as of other countries in her condition for a long time to come. In welcoming Dr. Tousek to occupy the chair this morning the Ramakrishna Parliament of Religions is conscious that India is thereby being brought into living contact with a great tradition of soul-enfranchizing ideals

and spiritual activities with which the Czech people has been associated in a creative capacity for over five hundred years.

MONDAY, THE 8TH MARCH, 1937, EVENING

SRIMAT SWAMI SUDDHANANDA, *Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Belur Math*:

Before I came to this august assembly, I had no idea that I should have to speak something on this occasion. But as I have been requested to speak, I say only a few words. You know on the opening day of this Parliament I came to this Town Hall and the one thing which I told a fellow-monk of ours was that Swami Vivekananda, my revered master, told the whole Calcutta public regarding Sri Ramakrishna: "Before this idea of Parliament of Religions was thought of, here lived a man whose very life was a Parliament of Religions as it should be." I do not wish to dilate on the great life of Sri Ramakrishna. Only let me pray that he may enlighten our hearts so that in the name of religions we may not make any mistakes in our intellectual discussions, but may realize the goal of religions: I believe, if every fellow-Hindu, Christian or Mohammedan or any one else tries to be true to the teachings of his religion and is sincere, he would realize the same Being, which is the Source of the whole world, Eternal Knowledge and Peace. So we need not convert a man of one religion to another religion. You must have conversion, our minds must be *converted*, but none need be converted from one faith to another. May I hope that this Parliament of Religions will usher in the day of peace and goodwill amongst the different religions of the world and enable us to try to realize the goal of religion.

MAHARAJADHIRAJA BAHADUR SIR BIJAY CHAND MAHTAB, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., of *Burdwan*:

I rather feel like an interloper at your great gathering this evening, because you are anxious to hear other speakers before you conclude your meeting. My mind flies back to Geneva and I think it was in the year 1925 when at the invitation of my friend, Sir Francis Younghusband, we gathered on a similar occasion.

The president this evening has very rightly remarked that if the League of Nations with its wonderful buildings on the banks of Lake Geneva had something more substantial behind it than the desire of trying to put down the weak and assert the rights of the stronger, then perhaps this Parliament of Religions might have had more effect in Europe which at the present moment is sadly in need of more brotherly feeling between nation and nation. I see over there a saying, "Blessed are they that are free from lust." This lust of greed, this lust of expanding territory by drowning poor nations still goes on unabated in the West from which we have copied or imitated many things.

Today it is a happy coincidence that you should be meeting here on the occasion of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary and as I do not wish to detain you, ladies and gentlemen, I will conclude with just a saying, quoted by Sri Ramakrishna, on the basis of all religions:

কাল ধনো যতই বল,
পুরুষ মেয়ে সেই সকল।
অনেক বুলি বাজায় ঢুলি;
বাজে বিস্ত একই ঢোল॥

Call them black or white, if you will,
They are but men and women!
Many are the rhythms struck by the *dhuli* (drummer),
But it is the same *dhul* (drum) that sounds.

CHAPTER IX

FAREWELL ADDRESSES

MONDAY, THE 8TH MARCH, 1937, EVENING

PROF. YUSUF AHMAD BAGDADI *of Bagdad*:

As our meetings have come to a conclusion, I feel that I must offer my thanks to the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee for holding the Parliament of Religions which peoples from all parts of the world attended to understand one another's religion and to establish unity between all communities for helping one another in overcoming the obstacles of daily life; and you all know I have really very little more to say except that I wish you all a very, very happy and prosperous future.

SISTER AMALA *of Boston, U. S. A.*:

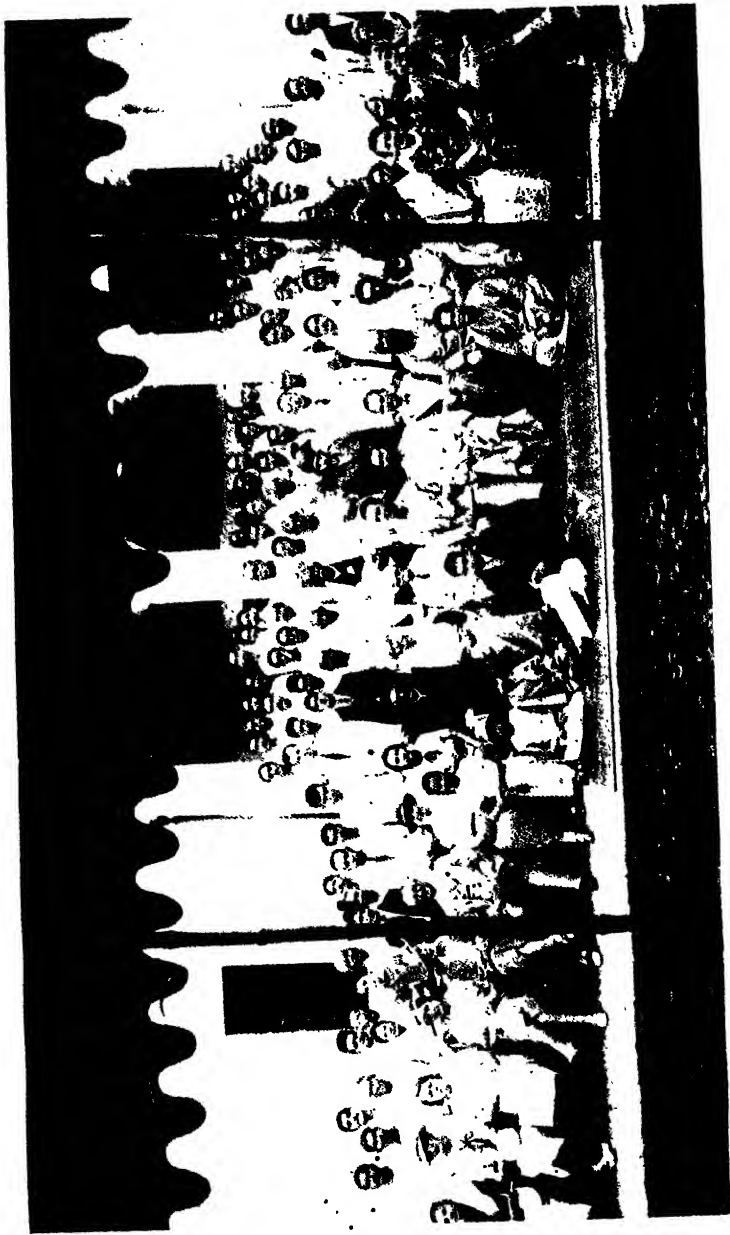
It is indeed my holy privilege and joy to stand before you this memorable evening when we are drawn together by a great Cause, in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the great Saint of Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva. Since my early childhood God seemed to me to be embodied in all Nature and everything about me. To me He was the life-giving sun—the infinite sky, the myriad stars, the silver moon, the clouds, the thunder, the lightning, the storm,—the velvety grass, the flowers, the trees,—the bees, the butterflies, the birds, the insects,—the earth, the waters,—He was Everything that lived,—moved, or stood still! His was the life in man, regardless of the colour, religion, language or country. Thus my meditative hours wove themselves into a sort of philosophy which I earnestly strove to abide by, so that during the War of 1914, I remembered that God is Father to all,—even though man fought to conquer his brother—I could only hold aloft a white flag of peace, without the ordinary feelings of hatred or malice towards anyone.



Delegates landing on the grounds of the Belur Math, Monday, March 8



Delegates and other Guests at the Belur Math, Monday, March 8



Delegates and other Guests at the Belur Math, Monday, March 8

Often I felt alone in my world—with God everywhere about me. No one quite understood my mood, bringing me more introspection until I found through the works of Doctor Rabindranath Tagore a companion to my thoughts. From a very tender age, India held for me my Spiritual Treasure. I had looked into Spiritualism, Christian Science, New Thought and Theosophy, but I could not wholly feel oneness with my inner ideal, until, in the spring of 1919 when I had the rare good fortune of meeting Swami Paramanandaji (who you know is a direct disciple of Swami Vivekanandaji), who was lecturing on the Vedānta Philosophy in Los Angeles, California. Then, I stopped seeking, for I had found—found a fulfilment in completion with my childhood philosophy. My God was everywhere, embodied in all the Great Lights of the World! I could worship Him then, in the Christ, Mohammed, Buddha, Zoroaster, Sri Kṛiṣṇa, Ramachandra, Confucius, the Prophets, Saints and Seers of both East and West ; in Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva—in you and in me! India's great spiritual heritage upheld my conviction of God in all, and all in God. Thus, spiritual companionship was mine from then on.

Just as in the flower garden we find many flowers of different shapes, sizes, colours, leaves and perfumes, yet, one thing they have in common, their roots are implanted in and obtain nourishment from the same source, the Mother Earth, similarly we, following different expressions and paths of religious thoughts and ideas, gather nutriment and sustenance from the same Source—God.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva through the spiritual practices and realizations of his holy life, has proved to the world that all this is true. He became not only a Hindu, but a Mohamadan, a Buddhist and a Christian. Through each Saviour he attained the self-same Goal—God, Whom he called, 'The Divine Mother of the Universe,' and proclaimed, 'Whatever path man travels wholeheartedly, he will attain unto God. The name does not matter, nor the approach, but the motive, the purity of purpose and the one-pointed devotion for the Ideal, regardless of name or form. This brings one to the culmination of oneness with That Source—the Eternal, Omnipotent and Unchanging One.'

So, let us not go away thinking that our way is the best and only way, but let us remember the flower-garden in which all of us are flowers with different shapes, forms, colours and perfumes, finding our common nourishment in the same soil of Mother Earth, or God. Let us think of one another after we have gone back to the countries where the physical part was born, and recall this Parliament of Religions where we have come together mingling our various perfumes, colours, shapes and forms into a harmonious and enriched blending of universal understanding and love.

SWAMI SHARVANANDA *of the Ramakrishna Mission, Delhi and Karachi:*

After going through eight days' sessions of the Parliament of Religions, I find the hall is filled with one spirit of harmony, and this experience of mine makes me bold to address you as friends, and I am sure this is the prevailing spirit of this assembly. One of the greatest saints of our Upanishads declared: From *Ananda* the whole creation has come into being, from *Ananda*, the Supreme Bliss ; in Bliss this creation exists ; and into Bliss again it enters. And this is the experience one finds while going through the different observations on different religions—that all the Prophets gave their religion in joy. They experienced the highest ecstasy; that the key-note of life is Supreme Bliss and this is God. In fact, with the Hindus it is a fundamental tenet that God is Bliss, and we find while listening to the representatives of different religions that God indeed is Bliss. Because when any religion is properly propounded in the words and spirit of its prophet, we do feel and even members belonging to other faiths feel a kind of joy within, and that the prophets preached in joy, and they maintained religion in joy. So, always the religion of the prophets, the religion of the saints and seers, is filled with joy. It gives joy to others, but in the religion of the church, religion of the priests, religion of the professional preachers, degenerating into doctrines, dogmas and crystallized form of faith, we find no joy. On the other hand, it crushes the humanity, the God in man, and Swami Vivekananda used to say it is good to be born in a church, but it is bad to die in it. We notice the religion of

the prophets, of the seers and saints, is deeply imbued with this spirit of *Ānanda* of the Land of Liberty. That joy, that *Ānanda*, is the essence of religion. That is God Himself and we all live in *Ānanda*. Not for a single second, without this *Ānanda* or the Supreme Bliss that God is, a single being can live. So friends, whether we be atheists or theists, whether we be believers in personal God or impersonal God, whether we believe in *Advaita* or *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, the whole humanity is hankering for one thing and that is Bliss or *Ānanda*. *Ānanda* is the pole-star of life and we are all proceeding towards it. *Ānanda* is the key-note of religion. And this Parliament of Religions also was conceived in *Ānanda*, in the bliss of the people's devotion to the Master of Harmony, and I pray to the Lord with the humble forces of the soul I possess that it may end in *Ānanda*. May it dissolve in bliss and leave behind the permanent mark in our heart that religion is Bliss, God is Bliss, Love is God, Love is Religion! May God bless us all!

MADAME PROF. WILLMAN-GRABOWSKA, *Krakow, Poland*:

We all desire to take rest. We have all seen the splendid success of the Rāmakrishna Centenary Celebrations and the Parliament of Religions: I love you, my dear Indian friends. The Vice-Chancellor of my University said to me smiling, "You can find in India a splendid diamond." I did not find a diamond, perhaps I did not search for it carefully. Perhaps I could not discover even a diamond, not to speak of a splendid diamond. What is it I have found? It is pure love.

SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND, *London*:

I desire on this the last occasion of having the honour to speak to you to express on behalf of the foreign delegates our profound admiration of the way in which this great Parliament of Religions has been organized, the good temper which has been preserved throughout and the unflinching courtesy which has been displayed to us all; and these expressions of appreciation we have put in this little book with our signatures which we would desire to present to the organizers of this Parliament. (At this stage

Sir Francis presented to the Centenary Committee the autograph book containing the signatures of the foreign delegates.) Now I like to say one word on my own impression, and that is this. Speaking as a Christian, and a profoundly convinced Christian, I have been deeply moved by observing that here and there in one address or another there was just a little quotation from our Christian Scriptures, quotations such as "Love thy neighbour as thyself," "The Kingdom of God is within you," "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all else will follow," "In my father's house are many mansions." When I hear these little quotations, which to us Christians are deep in our constitution, they do arouse in me the deep feeling of gratitude that you of the other faiths so deeply appreciate my own and that leads me quite naturally to Ramakrishna's great principle that no religion should try to conquer the others, to impose itself on the others. But here is an example that though he did not try to capture, he has actually captivated men of another religion. We have been drawn to Hinduism by the appreciation of our own religion, in a way in which we might not have otherwise been. So I do desire most sincerely to thank you for your hospitality to us, for your gracious courtesy all through, and above all for the way in which you have proclaimed the spirit of your great Saint, the Saint of Dakshineswar. I shall go back to England with feelings of deep conviction in my heart and profound thankfulness.

JEAN HERBERT of *Paris*:

I came here with no mandate from anybody, but just as a private wanderer and as a friend of India. During the two months before this Congress, I had the privilege of seeing some of the spiritual beacons of India. I saw Sri Ramana Maharshi at Tiruvannamalai and received his blessings. I saw Mahatma Gandhi and his co-workers, and also Sri Aurobindo Ghosh. Having seen these great sages, I came here and I was impressed by the spirit of these young men, the volunteers, with a light of devotion and brilliance in their eyes, the spirit of self-sacrifice and of service of the highest qualities in man. Well, a country which has such teachers and such disciples can look into the future with

every confidence and this message I want to give to you, my friends of India. Do not be apologetic about your own country. When you take a foreign friend to your city, do not keep repeating to him that your streets are dirty. Your foreign friend has only to go a little interior into his own country to find a worse state of things. When you speak of the statues and images of the Deity you worship in your homes and in your temples, do not call them 'Idols,' for it is insulting them. Be proud of all the inspiration you are deriving from them, and above all of your own country.

SARDAR JAMAÏT SINGH of *Calcutta*:

The first Parliament of Religions was held 44 years ago in a free country, America. Its people love freedom, its people worship freedom, and because of that Swami Vivekananda was able to give his message to the people of the United States. But this Parliament is being held, I may say, in a country which is not free, and with due respect to the speakers who have delivered lectures on this platform, I say that people who are not free have no religion. I am saying a few words to the foreign gentlemen who are sitting here, and I request them to convey this message to their people, that we in India are a very ancient race, and the foundation of all religions is in India. Ladies and gentlemen of the foreign countries, I tell you on behalf of the youth of India, whom I have the honour to represent, that if we had been able to grow as you grow, if we had been able to rise as you rise, even in the matter of religion, we by our spirituality would have revolutionized the world. Ladies and gentlemen, we know you Americans are great men, we know you Englishmen are great men: we Indians are not great in wealth, but we are great in spiritual strength. Therefore, I tell you that under the inspiration of a new Christ that is born,—I mean Mahatma Gandhi—India is going forward towards freedom, and when we have acquired freedom we shall again call you for a Parliament of Religions and then you will see what India is capable of as the land of the free. Then you will compare the Indians of today and the Indians of that day. I hope the day is not far off.

DR. DWARAKA NATH MITTER, *Ex-Justice, Calcutta High Court*:

As a Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Centenary Committee, I have been entrusted with a farewell message. As you all know, a farewell message has its melancholy reflections. It is always sorrowful to part. It was with very great enthusiasm that seven days ago, we welcomed the delegates from the different parts of the world, who at great personal sacrifice, accepted our invitation to attend the Parliament of Religions, and today the hour has arrived when we are to offer them our message of farewell. Our greatest thanks are due to the different delegates from the different parts of the world, who have come to attend the Parliament which is connected with the name of Sri Ramakrishna, the great Saint of modern times, the height and glory of Bengal. The reason why I say that great thanks are due to these delegates is that through them it has been possible to spread throughout the world, to the North and South, to the East and West, the teachings of the great saint Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. As you know, India is the land of the Rishis and the teachings of the Rishis have the effect of ennobling the mind of man to whichever part of the world he belongs. Of Sri Ramakrishna's teachings, it may justly be said that from his lips came the religion that spiritualizes philosophy, and it is in this respect that I shall only state to you the great trait in Sri Ramakrishna's character, the fundamental point in his teachings. As I read his teachings, I find in him the wonderful great cardinal doctrine which he preached, namely the unity of the universe, the unity amongst diversity, the oneness of life. If the implications of these teachings had been realized, you would not have seen the tragic spectacle in western Europe today. What is the implication of this teaching? It is that you ought to regard every other man as yourself. If you regard the neighbour as your own self, you would not think of injuring him. If this principle had been followed, the grim spectacle that is happening in Spain today would not have happened. It is this teaching not only of Sri Ramakrishna, but of the Rishis, which the Western nations really owe to India. It is no doubt true that the teaching of this great saint Sri Rama-

krishna has been spread in the most eminent degree by a great disciple of his,—Swami Vivekananda—and it is for this reason that we find men and women from America, China, England and the Continent have come here, and it is a delight to me to see them here. It is a great lesson to the Western nations that after all no nation can thrive on materialism, and ultimately this great truth will be found out, if not now, perhaps after another Great War, that India has stuck to the great truth and that today the nation has to be built on spirituality. I should thank Sir Francis Young-husband and other delegates for the very courteous words which they have expressed with regard to the management of this Parliament. We are conscious of our own limitations. We were not able to give them as much comfort as we wanted to. At the same time we have had the benefit and advantage of the ideas from each individual coming from different parts of the world. To them I say farewell, and we wish them the best of years of health and happiness in the years to come.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS AND THANKS

PROF. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR, one of the Secretaries of the Parliament, in bringing the proceedings to a close:

PROFESSOR DHRUVA, SWAMI BHAGAVATANANDAJI, SWAMIS OF THE RAMAKRISHNA ORDER, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The most important feature of this International Parliament of Religions, organized by the Ramkrishna Centenary Committee, calls for a notice at the outset. The Congress has come into existence through the initiative of the people. From beginning to end it has been a function of the people and has been managed by the people's men. No official or semi-official individuals or institutions have had anything to do with the organization that brought it into being. Here is to be found one of the most characteristic differences between this International Parliament and the International Parliaments and Congresses convened in other countries of the world.

The success of a great function like this depends on the direct and indirect services, active as well as passive, of a large number of persons among the workers, participants, audience as well as invited guests. On behalf of the Ramakrishna Centenary Committee it is my pleasant duty to signalize the friendly assistance derived from each one of these groups. In the first place, the volunteers who have looked after the order and discipline of these meetings deserve our warmest congratulations. Secondly, the patience and the forbearance of the delegates and other participants many of whom have come from far-off places and also from across the seas are extraordinary and worthy of the highest recognition from the side of the organizers. I thank them for their kindness and sympathetic considerations.

In the third place, we cannot be too grateful to the newspapers of Calcutta. They have devoted their columns to the proceedings of the Parliament in quite a liberal manner. Undoubtedly they have appraised the work of this Assembly at its proper worth and understood its value for India and mankind.

Fourthly, the Corporation of Calcutta deserves the most heartfelt thanks of the Ramakrishna Centenary Committee for enabling the International Parliament of Religions to be held in the Town Hall, Calcutta, for over a week. We are indebted also to the University Institute authorities for arranging one venue of this Parliament in their spacious Hall.

The citizens of Calcutta and environs as well as of the districts in the neighbourhood are to be congratulated on the wonderful support they have extended to the Ramakrishna Centenary Committee by their friendly presence at these lectures for so many days. The manner in which they have followed the proceedings of this Parliament is an index to their enthusiasm in the cause of a world-wide symposium on the deepest problems of individual and social life. In this hall we have had at every session, morning and evening, representatives of all the provinces of India as well as of many different countries of the world. The patience and the pin-drop silence of the multi-racial and polyglot crowds that

have attended the fifteen meetings have proved in the most concrete manner conceivable that the mind of Calcutta, in spite of the hard and strenuous affairs of commercial and industrial life such as characterize this international city, is large and idealistic enough to take interest in the topics of moral and spiritual reconstruction. I offer my sincere appreciation and cordial thanks to the people of Calcutta, Bengalis and non-Bengalis alike, for their culture-mindedness, intellectual catholicity and cosmopolitan outlook.

Members of the audience have requested the Committee of this Parliament to extend the proceedings for another day of two sessions. We appreciate very much their enthusiasm and interest. But it has been felt that there must be an end to every good thing, and the Committee have decided to conclude the proceedings tonight as arranged in the programme.

Our sincere thanks are due to Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, and His Excellency Sir John Anderson, Governor of Bengal for their kind words of appreciation and sympathy. Although Mahatma Gandhi could not be present in person we were favoured with his telegram. And in one of our chairmen, Kaka Kalelkar of Maharashtra, we had one of his message-bearers. We are grateful to him for this co-operation. His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad wired us a fine message and we thank him for this consideration.

We regret very much that on account of unavoidable circumstances it was not possible for Sir Akbar Hydari of Hyderabad (Deccan), Sir T. Vijayaraghavachariar of Madras and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya of Benares to attend the Parliament as chairmen. But we are indebted to them for their friendly co-operation in diverse ways.

A great disappointment was caused by the inability of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh to participate in our Parliament. It was not possible for him under any circumstances to leave Pondicherry.

The audience has not had the occasion to hear or to see much of our General President, Dr. Sir Brajendra Nath Seal.

It is his intense love for us and our work that inspired him in spite of his ill health to come in person and open the proceedings. As long as he is alive he will be called upon by Young Bengal to initiate, except when it is utterly impossible, similar undertakings of a cultural and spiritual character. Brajendra Nath has been the *guru* of Young India for more than four decades. He is one of the architects of the Indian renaissance of the twentieth century, the renaissance that has commenced Indianizing the world in the diverse arts and sciences. We recall with pleasure that it was Brajendra Nath who was invited over a quarter of a century ago to open in 1911 the Universal Races Congress convened in London. Equally important to recall in this connection is the fact that he was a personal friend and intimate associate of Swami Vivekananda. I wish him sound health, strong physique, and above all, an active influence on the present generation for many many years.

In Swami Abhedananda's participation as one of our chairmen we had the privilege of guidance by a *guru-bhai* (spiritual comrade) of Swami Vivekananda. We are exceedingly grateful to him for the message that he delivered, for he is one of the last of those fortunates who got their inspiration direct from Sri Ramakrishna.

The address of Rabindranath Tagore as one of our chairmen is, as I have described on another occasion,¹ one of the greatest contributions of his life to the spiritual fund of mankind. In its emphasis on the sincerity of heart, personal devotion and individual spirituality as contrasted with institutional religiosity, organized rites and formal ceremonies it is destined to be as epoch-making as Erasmus the German humanist's *Handbook of the Christian Knight*, published on the eve of the Reformation.

It is necessary to stress that the association of Swami Bhagavanandaji, Mandaliswara, of Benares, is one of the achievements of this Parliament. It has been proved thereby that Young India is continuing the creative endeavours of the past Indian tradition while promoting the spirituality of modern times. Swami Bhaga-

¹ See p. 1008

vatanandaji's message has indicated, besides, the alertness and elasticity of the brains nurtured along the old channels of Indian culture.

It is worth while perhaps to call attention to the fact that we have had two ladies in our presidential *corps*. I have already referred to Mme de Guiraldes. It remains to say that the address of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu as chairwoman was one of her most creative messages to India.

We have pleasure in offering our greetings to the people of Iran from whom we have had able messengers in Professor Muhammad Ali Shirazi, one of our chairmen, and in Muhammad Hasan Kashani of Yezd as well as in Shaik Abu Nasr Gilani of Gilan. We are thankful also to Prof. P. V. Serebriakov-Elboursky, President of the *Academia Asiatica*, Teheran, for his co-operation.

Our greetings are likewise being offered to Iraq whose representative at our Parliament is Prof. Yusuf Ahmad Bagdadi of Bagdad. We are happy that our Parliament has been able to develop contacts with these two progressive Moslem states, Iran and Iraq.

Extra-Indian Islam was further represented at this Parliament by a paper from His Eminence the Grand Sheik Mohammed Mustapha El-Maraghy, President of Al-Azhar University at Cairo, Egypt. Our best wishes are being offered to the Egyptian people for this fraternal co-operation.

No Turks appear to have been present in this Hall. Indeed there is hardly any Turk in Calcutta. But a bit of the culture of New Turkey was revealed to us by the presence of a professor of the University of Ankara, Dr. W. Rubens, a German scholar. Through him we send our cordial greetings to the Turkish people.

The Chinese scholar, President Lim Boon Keng of Amoy University has sent to this Parliament a noble tribute to the spirit of Ramakrishna. Besides, China was represented by Dr. C. L. Chen, one of our chairmen, as well as by Prof. Tan Yun-Shan of Sino-Indian Cultural Federation, Nanking, now at Tagore's Viswa-Bharati, Bolpur. The friendship that these Chinese scholars have extended to us is to be interpreted as but a continuation of

the historic cultural alliance between India and China for ages. We are thankful to Dr. Chen and Prof. Tan Yun-Shan because they have enabled us to experience this age-long friendship with personal touches. I request them to carry with them back to the Chinese people India's hopes and wishes for China's material prosperity and moral welfare.

No Japanese scholar could be present at the Parliament. Until the last moment we believed that it would be possible for President Gaku Matsumoto of Nippon Cultural Federation, Member of the House of Peers, Tokyo, to come to Calcutta. We regret that it was not possible. We thank him for his goodwill and his message. The Parliament is, further, to be congratulated on the messages coming from the Buddhist Federation of Kumamoto, Buddhist Association of Kyoto, and Japan Cultural Federation, Tokyo, as well as from Prof. M. Ui of the Imperial University of Tokyo. The paper on Shinto Theology by Prof. M. Ishikawa of Tokyo has been an important item of our proceedings.

The presence of Mr. Ngak Chhen Rinpoche, Prime Minister to the Tashi Lama, and his greetings in Tibetan were appreciated by the audience. Our thanks are due to him and we offer our goodwill to the Tibetan people.

We have already expressed our appreciation of Czechoslovakia's participation in this Parliament.¹ Through Dr. Tousek, one of our chairmen, we send our greetings to his fatherland, which was also represented at this Parliament by a paper from the indologist Professor Winternitz.

We are thankful to Jugoslavia for her co-operation through a paper by Professor Peritch of Belgrade as well as to Rumania for messages from Professors Herseni and Vladesco-Racoassa of Bucharest and for a paper from Professor Narly of Cernauti.

We are indebted to the University of Krakow in Poland for granting Mme Professor Helene de Willman-Grabowska leave of absence in order to attend the Parliament. We appreciate her work and offer the people of Poland our salutations while thanking them at the same time for the papers by Professors Kochanowski

¹ See p. 1020.

and Schayer of Warsaw, as well as for the message from Rector Szafer of Krakow.

In Dr. G. H. Mees of Holland we have come across a fine scholar and a gentle spirit. We entrust him with our message of goodwill for the Dutch people from whom, besides, we have received co-operation in the form of appreciations from Professors S. R. Steinmetz (Amsterdam), J. J. von Schmid (Leyden) and others. It is to be observed that the paper and observations of Dr. Hermann Goetz who came, with Mrs. Goetz, as delegate from the Kern Institute of Leyden have been well appreciated.

A noteworthy discovery of this Parliament is Monsieur Jean Herbert of Paris. He is an acquisition for India. I have no doubt that he will function as a strong pillar of the Ramakrishna Empire—the modern world-republic of creative India—in Europe and will be a powerful instrument in the annexation of his *patrie*, France, as of other countries to the new system of moral and cultural values initiated by the Indian people. Our cordial thanks are due to his services, and through him as well as through Monsieur Paul Dubois, Consul-General for France at Calcutta, and Mme Dubois who have attended several sessions and social functions we have pleasure in sending the people of France friendly greetings from India.

Monsieur Romain Rolland has been an exponent of the Ramakrishna Empire of spiritual brotherhood and international goodwill for a long time. The mantle of Sister Nivedita may be said to have fallen on this great French *Rishi* as a lover of modern India and the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement. He was to have been present at Calcutta in person but health considerations have compelled him to remain content with a message. His letter is an inspiring document for which India and mankind will remain indebted to him.

France was further represented by messages from the Paris indologists, Professors Renou and Przyluski, as well as by papers from the sociologist, Professor Lasbax of Clermont-Ferrand, and the indologist, Professor Masson-Oursel of Paris. The wealth of this Parliament has been greatly enriched by these contributions as well as by the paper from Mlle M. Chovin of Toulouse.

This International Parliament of Religions is happy to enjoy the friendly alliance of the World Congress of Faiths convened last July (1936) in London. This useful *liaison* has been established in a very unobtrusive manner on account of the participation in our Parliament by the organizer of the World Congress, Sir Francis Younghusband. Let me commence by thanking him for presenting this Parliament with the very first copy of *Faiths and Fellowship*, being the Proceedings of the World-Congress. Many men and women among the audience have come into contact with this grand old man of England. Everybody has watched how punctual, regular and single-minded his attendance has been at our meetings. We have had the pleasure of hearing him in various connections and we have felt that his utterances were remarked by respect for all and sundry. This democratic appreciation of the diverse elements in this Congress is one of the important features with which Sir Francis has enriched the proceedings of the Parliament. He has thereby helped us to a considerable extent in giving shape to one of the great objectives of our Committee, namely, the realization, through this assembly, of Ramakrishna's fundamental teachings in regard to the freedom of the individual and the world-republic of religions. Those who have seen Sir Francis outside this Parliament addressing other audiences in Calcutta have been impressed by the fact that he has always made it a point to refer to Ramakrishna and bring in Ramakrishna's messages in some context or other, no matter what the particular topic of his discourse may have been. It is the call of Ramakrishna that brought him to Calcutta all the way from London, and in Calcutta he has served Ramakrishna and Ramakrishna alone.

I have pleasure in offering Sir Francis the sincere thanks of this International Parliament, of the city of Calcutta as well as of India for undertaking all the troubles of the journey as well as of the strenuous sojourn in our midst under conditions of "overwork and under-feeding." I am not without hopes, however, that we shall have to remain grateful to him in future also for all that he is sure to do for the thoughts and activities of the Indian people at home and abroad, when he is back to England and

placed in more congenial surroundings. Let me send through Sir Francis the greetings of Young India to Young England fully conscious that he has served England as much as he has served India by his short sojourn.

British co-operation with our Parliament deserves to be mentioned as an independent item. Papers have been received from Professors A. B. Keith of Edinburgh and G. Slater of Oxford, and Mrs. Ruth Fry of Thorpens (Suffolk). Messages have come from the Earl of Sandwich (by cable), Mrs. C. M. Beach of Surrey, Dr. J. C. Maxwell Garnett (League of Nations Union, London), Professor H. G. Wood of Birmingham and Miss Sharples of the Society for Promoting the Study of Religions, London.

We were informed by the *Deutsche Akademie* of Munich that the German Government had sanctioned the presence of German scholars at our Parliament. But regrettably enough, some personal difficulties stood in the way of the selected persons coming to Calcutta and participating in the proceedings. It is worth while to observe, however, that German religious thought has been well represented at this Parliament on account of the papers sent by Professor von Brockdorff (Kiel), Count Keyserling (Darmstadt), and Professors Thurnwald (Berlin), von Wiese (Cologne) and Zahn (Munich). The co-operation of German scholarship with the culture of Young India is an important matter of modern history.

It is to be noted with pleasure that Count von Podewils, Consul-General for Germany in Calcutta, and Countess von Podewils were present at several sessions and social functions of our Parliament.

On behalf of this Parliament as well as of the Indian people I offer my cordial thanks to the people of New Germany.

From Italy we were expecting Professor Giuseppe Tucci, Vice-President of the Royal Italian Academy and *Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente* (Rome) as one of our chairmen at the Parliament. But unfortunately, circumstances compelled him to put off his departure for India much to our

disappointment. We thank him, however, for his message. The messages from Professors Corrado Gini and Giorgio del Vecchio of Rome as well as Senator Achille Loria of Turin should however be singled out as important items. The papers from Professors Alfredo Niceforo and Mrs. Gisella Craig of Rome are likewise noteworthy. Our thanks are due to the Italian people for these friendly considerations. Let us send our greetings to the Italian people through Commendatore Camillo Giuriati, Consul-General for Italy in Calcutta, and Signora Giuriati, who attended several sessions and social functions.

We are very happy to observe that the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order were conspicuous among the audience as well as among the speakers. They came from the different districts of Bengal as well as from distant Burma, Ceylon, Southern India, U. P., Bombay and Sind. Swami Paramananda, Head of the Boston Centre in the U. S. A., came from North America as one of our chairmen. We are happy that he came not merely to put in his presence but to actively participate in the proceedings. Swami Paramananda's voice was heard by us on a large number of occasions and every time it was appreciated. From South America came Swami Vijayananda, Head of the Centre at Buenos Aires in Argentina. The audience has followed his observations and lectures with great interest. His address in Bengali may be recalled in this connection. It is to Swami Vijayananda's influence in Argentina, let it be mentioned *en passant*, that we owe the presence, in our midst, of the gifted South American lady, Mme de Guiraldes, who was one of our presidents.

Through Swamis Paramananda and Vijayananda I am happy to send fraternal sentiments from the people of India to the peoples of the New Hemisphere. Let us also charge the Argentinian lady, Mme de Guiraldes, and Dr. Peter Boike of Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A., who has co-operated with us in several ways, as well as their peoples.

We have one great item of disappointment to note in connection with our expectations from the U. S. A. We had been almost sure that Rev. Dr. John Haynes Holmes of the Community Church of New York would come to Calcutta as one of our

chairmen. It was regrettably enough impossible for him to leave the States on account of other pressing engagements.

American thought has, however, enriched our proceedings in diverse ways. We have received messages from Professors Hocking and Sorokin of Harvard University, Reverend Fisher of Detroit (Michigan), Professors E. T. Williams of California and E. A. Ross of Wisconsin as well as papers from President F. B. Robinson of the College of the City of New York, Professors C. A. Ellwood of Duke University (North Carolina), E. Horowitz of Hunter College (New York) and F. Hankins of Smith College (Northampton, Mass.).

The most genuine and heart-felt thanks of this Parliament as well as of the Ramakrishna Centenary Committee are to be expressed to the silent and sincere Miss Josephine MacLeod (Stratford-on-Avon, England), the American lady. She has been a servant of India since the days of Swami Vivekananda who discovered in her a remarkable colleague and co-worker in the establishment of the Ramakrishna Empire. Her contributions to the cultural work of modern India are immense, and I offer her the profoundest gratitude of the Indian people for all her solicitude in regard to the cause that Vivekananda laid nearest to his heart.

Perhaps we should not fail to bring to the notice of the audience that among rare visitors we have had Col. and Mrs. Lindberg of the U. S. A. This happy phenomenon we owe to the friendly thoughts of Sir Francis Younghusband.

The rare visitors include also Professor and Mrs. Vicente Fatone of the University of Buenos Aires in Argentina (South America). They have attended all the sessions of the Parliament and followed our proceedings with keen interest. I thank them heartily for their eagerness and attention. Through them also I send our feelings of goodwill to the academic and cultural institutions of Latin America.

The presence of Miss Helen Boulnois, Johannesburg (South Africa) is an item which must not be overlooked. Her greetings had extraordinary importance in view of the fact that South Africa's attitude to India is, as a rule, not marked by desirable feelings.

Among the many friends whom this Parliament has discovered in the field of idealistic activities we may mention Sardar Jamait Singh of Calcutta. We thank him and his Sikh community for the wonderful spirit of fellowship they have exhibited in connection with the functioning of this Congress. The Mahabodhi Society of India, the Dev Samaj of Lahore, the Arya Samaj of Calcutta and the Punjab, the Jains of Calcutta, the Parsees of India, the Mussulmans of Bengal, the Jewish community, the National Council of the Young Men's Christian Associations in India, Burma and Ceylon, the Buddhists of Burma, the Theosophical Society of Calcutta, the Universities of Calcutta and Benares, are among our own people to whom thanks are due for their fine fellowship and cordial co-operation. We appreciate the greetings from these organized bodies as well as the papers from their representatives or the scholars interested in their thoughts and sentiments.

Finally, we should like to single out for our warm thanks Prof. Viscount Santa Clara of Spain (now at Calcutta University) who read a fine message before us, Prof. G. L. Duprat of Geneva, General Secretary of the International Federation of the Institutes of Sociology, who authorized the present speaker to represent the Federation at this Parliament, Dr. J. Leyder of Institut Solvay, Brussels (Belgium), Mr. Maung Aye Maung of Rangoon, as well as Lady Ezra of Calcutta, and the President of our Working Committee and Executive Committee, Sir Manmatha Nath Mukherjee.

The audience will have observed that for every session we had a large number of speakers. The topics for each session also were diverse. It was not in the plan to present the audience with a uniformity or monotony at any session. A delightful variety in personnel as well as in subject-matter was the end in view. This arrangement is not without its shortcomings. And perhaps the shortcomings were felt by the participants in a rather painful manner. No speaker could possibly have at his disposal more than a few minutes. In order to do justice to the cosmopolitan character of this assembly it was necessary to crowd very many, perhaps too many papers or speeches into each of the fifteen

sessions. But on the other hand, there was an attempt on the part of the organizers to enable the same person to speak on more than one occasion. We believed that this Congress would serve its purpose best by publishing the papers and speeches as fully as possible in the form of an extensive book. It was believed that the actual participants would be able to enlighten the audience with just a few words describing their most basic thoughts. As it was the intention, again, to serve large audiences it was decided to exclude debates and discussions altogether from the programme. For large audiences that the Committee had in view and that actually attended the Parliament, debates and discussions between specialists might not appear very illuminating or instructive. To what extent our exclusions and inclusions have served their purpose it is not for us to judge.

We are not unconscious of our shortcomings. But the shortcomings of today will serve to straighten us in regard to our eventual adventures of tomorrow. What is more, others will learn how to guard themselves against the defects and errors to which we were liable. I call upon Young India to organize in the near future under entirely non-official auspices an International Congress such as should be less marked by shortcomings and more perfect in equipment. Let me hope, at any rate, that when in 1962 the Birth-Centenary of Vivekananda comes to be celebrated Young India will have acquired such an extensive command over the *viśva-śakti* (world-forces) both at home and abroad that the International Parliament of Religions which is coming to a close tonight may pale into insignificance by the side of the undertakings of that day in methods, messages and solid effects.

My last prayer, then, on behalf of this Congress as well as of all the activities of Young India can but be the most profoundly human and melioristic prayer for all mankind that has been the eternal prayer of the Indian people since the days of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad*, namely,

Asato mā sadgamaya
Tamaso mā jyotirgamaya
Mṛityor mā mṛitam gamaya

Lead me from unreality to Reality,
Lead me from darkness to Light,
Lead me from death to Immortality.

It is the greater and greater doses of reality, light and immortality that I invite Young India to go on conquering and to conquer every day. The perpetual preparedness of the Indian people with a view to wrestle with the shortcomings, hindrances, difficulties, and weaknesses of the hour is the final message of the International Parliament of Religions that was called into being in order to celebrate the Birth-Centenary of the great apostle of spiritual struggle for human liberty, Sri Ramakrishna.

APPENDIX

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS IN PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS, AT TOWN HALL, 1937.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

In connection with the Celebration of the first Birth Centenary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, which was organised by a committee of representative men of all shades of religious opinions and irrespective of caste, creed, colour and nationality with Sir M. N. Mukherjee Kt. as President, a Parliament of Religions was held at the Town Hall of Calcutta from the 1st to the 8th March which was attended by savants, philosophers, religious teachers and cultural leaders of most important countries of two Hemispheres.

The Swami Abhedanandaji Maharaj was the President on the second day at its after session.

I

WELCOME ADDRESS

On March 1st 1937, Sir Brajendra Nath Seal was elected general President of the Parliament of Religions at the Town Hall of Calcutta. After the reading of his opening address the President invited His Holiness Swami Abhedanandaji Maharaj to take the chair and left the hall.

The Swamiji occupied the chair in the midst of deafening applause and said :

Sisters and brothers, I thank the Centenary Committee for honouring me to take the chair of the President and for giving me the opportunity to address this representative assemblage.

I stand here not as a delegate from any Institution, not as the President of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of Calcutta, but as the humble spiritual son of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and the last surviving *Gurubhai* (spiritual brother) of the world-renowned Swami Vivekananda, whose mantle fell on my humble self, to carry on the works started by him in England and America in 1896 A.D. I had the good fortune to live with the great Swami Vivekananda in the three continents of Asia, Europe and America. For over twentyfive years, I successfully conducted the pioneering Vedanta works, the fruits of which are visible this evening at the representations from far and abroad. It is a source of immense joy to me to see that the message of my great Master is being more and more recognised and appreciated throughout the world.

In the name of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and of Swami Vivekananda, in the name of the Ramakrishna Mission as well as on behalf of the Ramakrishna Order, I welcome all the delegates who have come from far and near and offer my cordial greetings to them.

Nearly four thousand years ago, Bhagavan Sri Krishna declared :

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः । ।

‘Whosoever comes to me through whatsoever path I reach him. All men are struggling in the various paths of Religion which ultimately lead to one Almighty Lord of the Universe.’ But this declaration could not be fulfilled in that remote antiquity when there was only the *Sanātan Dharma*—one Eternal Religion and when different sectarian religions did not come into existence. After Sri Krishna came Buddha who was the founder of Buddhism, Zoroaster, the founder of Zoroastrianism in Persia, Lao-Tze and Confucius in China and Jesus the Christ the founder of Christianity. After Jesus arose Mahomet, Sankaracharya, Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism and other religious prophets. At last in the 19th Century Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna came to fulfil that declaration by practising the religious methods of various creeds and living like the consummation of all the prophets, seers and Incarnations of Divinity that appeared before His advent.

I hope that this Parliament of Religions will sound the death-knell of all communal strife and struggle, and will create a great opportunity for promoting fellowship among the various Faiths.

रुचीनां वैचित्याद्भुजु-कुटिल-नानापथजुषां ।
नृणामेको गम्यस्त्वमसि पयसामर्णव इव । ।

‘As rivers rising from different mountains run crooked or straight to one ocean, so the various religions of the world rising from different standpoints of view run toward one Infinite Ocean of *sat-chit-ānanda*—existence, intelligence and absolute bliss.

II

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

May He who is Ahura Mazda of the Zoroastrians, Jehovah of the Jews, Father-in-Heaven of the Christians, Allah of the Maho-

medans, Divine Mother and Brahman of the Hindus, grant unto us peace and blessings ! Peace, Peace, Peace be unto us all and to all living creatures !

In this age when material prosperity and commercial supremacy are the ideals and ruling powers of a civilized nation, when each nation distrusting its neighbours is armed to the teeth with infernal weapons to protect its self-interest and to massacre its neighbours with unimaginable violence as it is manifested in a civilized country like Spain in Europe, when the insatiable greed of a civilized nation led by its most powerful Dictator has subdued and conquered by means fair or foul, to gain supremacy over a weaker nation as it has been the case in Abyssinia, when human beings are regarded as soulless machines fitted to become the fodders of cannons and machine guns, when the ministers of Christian Churches are sending off their souls with the help of poison-gas and bombs to the Christian Heaven with Hallelujah for they are not worthy to live in this mundane world on account of their unpreparedness to combat the hordes armed with mechanised tanks, aeroplanes and scientific ammunitions, when in the East similar strife and conflict are rife, and when the religious communalism is sucking the heart's blood like the mythical Vampire in India, it is high time that the message of peace and goodwill and love for one's enemy as was taught two thousand years ago by the meek and gentle Son of man in Galilee should once more be re-iterated and emphasized with full spiritual force to suit the conditions according to the time, place and nationality. To fulfil this great purpose, to establish righteousness and to destroy evil, the Almighty Lord has manifested Himself in the human form of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna in Whose Centenary this Parliament of Religions is convened.

The present upheaval of the spiritual tide, the waves of which traversing nearly one half of the world have touched the shores of America, was produced by the Christ-like character and divine personality of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Who is recognised throughout India as the greatest saint of modern India and revered and honoured to-day by all classes of Hindus as the Ideal Manifestation, *Avatāra* of the Divine glory. His life was so wonderful and unparalleled that within ten years after His departure from this

earth, it attracted the admiration, respect and reverence, not only of all classes of people of India, but of many of the distinguished English and German scholars of the Nineteenth Century, who happened to know something about Him.

III

LIFE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA BY EUROPEAN SCHOLARS

A short account of the life of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna appeared for the first time in the January Number of the 'Imperial and Quarterly Review' of 1896 under the title of 'A modern Hindu Saint.' It was an able article penned by Prof. C. H. Tawney who was for many years the Professor of Sanskrit in Calcutta University and the distinguished Librarian of India House in London. This article aroused the interest of great many European scholars among whom late Prof. Max Müller showed his appreciation by publishing in the August Number of the 'Nineteenth Century' of 1896 a short sketch of this Hindu saint's life entitled 'A Real Mahatman.' In this celebrated article, which was for sometime the subject of most severe criticism both in England and India among many of the Christian Missionaries and the Theosophists, the noted Professor showed the difference between the imaginary Mahatmans of the Theosophists and the real Mahatman or the Great soul of India, Who had reached God-consciousness and had manifested Divinity in all the actions of His daily life. He gave a brief account of the extraordinary life of Sri Ramakrishna paying Him the highest tribute of honour and respect that a Christian scholar could give to a Divine manifestation in the so-called Heathen land. Later, in 1896, he compiled and published 'Ramakrishna, His Life and Sayings' collecting more facts about the life and sayings of this exemplary character perfumed with the fragrance of Divine personality.

In 1903 A.D. the Vedanta Society of New York, U.S.A. published in a separate volume the sayings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, and the 'Gospel of Ramakrishna' with an introduction

by the present speaker in 1907 A.D. 'The unsectarian and universal teachings of Sri Ramakrishna attracted the attention of the sincere and earnest seekers after truth among the Christians of America and Europe and the same Gospel of Ramakrishna (New York edition) was translated into Spanish and was published in Buenos Aires in South America in 1915 A.D. It was also translated into Portuguese and published from Brazil, South America. In Europe it was translated and published in Danish, Scandinavian and Czechoslovakie languages.

The well-renowned artist late Frank Dvorak of Prague, Austria, after reading this Gospel was so deeply impressed that he painted the life-size portrait of Sri Ramakrishna and sent it to the present speaker at the Vedanta Society of New York where it was worshipped by the American devotees and earnest students of Vedanta. Now, the same masterpiece portrait is placed upon the Altar of the newly-built Temple at the premises of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society in the heart of North Calcutta which was the Centre of spiritual activities of the Bhagavan.

In 1925 A. D. 'The Life of Sri Ramakrishna' with an introduction by M. K. Gandhi, was published by the 'Advaita Ashrama' of Mayavati in India. Later on the celebrated French savant Romain Rolland wrote 'The Life of Ramakrishna' in French in 1928 A.D. which was translated into English by E.F.Malcolm Smith and was published by the 'Advaita Ashrama' in 1930 A.D. In this volume Romain Rolland said : 'Allowing for differences of country and time Ramakrishna is the younger brother of our Christ'.

IV

PROF. MAX MÜLLER'S APPRECIATION

Prof. Max Müller was deeply impressed by the originality of this great Saint and real Mahatman Who was not brought up within the precincts of any University and Who drew the waters of His wisdom neither from any book nor scripture, nor from any ancient prophet, but directly from the eternal Fountain-head of all knowledge and wisdom. He reached the goal of all religions, not

by following the path that was laid down by any religious prophet or spiritual teacher of any country, but His path was original and untrodden by any of the Saviours of the world. Prof. Max Müller was also struck by the broad liberal and absolutely unsectarian spirit which pervades the utterings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. Indeed the life and sayings of the Bhagavan have given a death-blow to the sectarian bigotry and fanaticism of the so-called religious world. Whosoever has read His sayings is impressed with the universality of His spiritual ideals, which embrace the ideals of all mankind.

From His childhood, Sri Ramakrishna fought against all sectarian doctrines and dogmas, yet at the same time, He showed, that all sects and creeds were but the paths which lead sincere and earnest souls to the one universal goal of all religions. Having realised the highest ideal of every religion, by following the methods and practices of the various sects and creeds of the world, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna gave to humanity whatever spiritual experiences and realization He had acquired through *Sādhana*. Every idea which He gave was fresh from Above (the Divinity) and unadulterated by the product of human intellect, culture or scholastic education. Each step of His life from babyhood to the last moment, was extraordinary. Every stage was like the unfoldment of a chapter of a new scripture, especially written out by the unseen Hand to befit the minds of the East and the West and to fulfil the spiritual needs of the Twentieth Century.

This Great Sage showed in His life how to cultivate the search after God and proved by His example, that wherever there is extreme longing to see God, there is the nearness of the realization of the Absolute Truth. The life of this great Real Mahatman has been the grand testimony to the fact that even in this age, Divinity can be reached and that Divine perfection can be acquired by those who are pure in heart, chaste, simple and who can devote their whole heart and soul to God for spiritual realization alone, and not for any material gain.

V

IDEAL MAHATMAN

We have neither seen nor heard of a character purer, simpler, more chaste and more godly than that of this ideal Mahatman, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. He was like the personification of purity and chastity, and embodiment of truthfulness. His life was a life of absolute renunciation and He never cared for the pleasures and comforts of earthly existence. The only comfort, pleasure, or happiness which He felt in His life was at the time when He was in the blissful state of *samādhi* or God-consciousness, and when His soul being liberated from the bondage of physical body soared high in the infinite space of the Absolute and entered into the abode of everlasting peace and blessedness.

He could separate His soul from the case of the physical organism at His will, and He had perfect control over this great Yoga Power (Bibhuti). He never recognised earthly relations, but God was His father, mother, brother, sister and everything.

Ramakrishna taught that every woman, old or young was the representative of the Divine Mother on earth. He worshipped God as the Mother of the Universe, and the Divine Mother, as He often used to say, showed Him that all women represented the Divine Motherhood on earth. For the first time, in the religious history of the world, this idea was preached by a Divine Incarnation and upon it depends the salvation of men and especially of women of all countries from immorality, corruption and all vices which prevail in a civilised community. It was Ramakrishna Who by His own example established the Truth of spiritual marriage on the soul plane alone, and not on the physical, even in this age of sensuality. He had a wife whom He always treated with reverence and whom He always looked upon as the representative of His Divine Mother. He never had any sex relation with her, nor with any woman, on the physical plane. His wife, the Blessed Virgin, Sarada Devi, lived like an embodiment of Divine Motherhood with innumerable spiritual children around her. She in turn, always regarded the Bhagavan as her Blessed Mother-Divine in a human form.

Up to the last moment of His earthly career the Bhagavan was absolutely pure, chaste and a perfect child of the Divine Mother of the Universe. Furthermore, He uplifted the ideal of womanhood on the spiritual plane, by accepting His '*Guru*' preceptor in a woman form. No other Saviour or spiritual leader has ever given such an honour to womanhood in the annals of religious history.

VI

HIS MISSION

The mission of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was to show by His living example how a truly spiritual man, being dead to the world of senses, can live on the spiritual plane of God-consciousness; it was to prove that each individual soul is immortal and potentially Divine. His mission was to establish harmony between religious sects and creeds. For the first time it was absolutely demonstrated by Ramakrishna that all religions are like so many paths leading to the same Goal, that the realization of the same Almighty Being is the highest Ideal of Christianity, Mahomedanism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, as well as of all other smaller religions of the world. Sri Ramakrishna's mission was to proclaim the eternal Truth that God is one but has many aspects, and that the same one is worshipped by different nations under various names and forms; that He is personal, impersonal and beyond both; that He is with name and form and yet nameless and formless. His mission was to establish the worship of the Divine Mother and thus to elevate the ideal of womanhood into Divine Motherhood. His mission was to show by His own example that true spirituality can be transmitted and that salvation can be obtained through the grace of a Divine Incarnation. His mission was to declare before the world that psychic powers and the power of healing are obstacles in the path of the attainment of God-consciousness.

Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna possessed all the Yoga powers but He seldom exercised those powers, especially the power of healing diseases. Moreover, He always prevented His disciples from either seeking or exercising those powers. But one power which we have seen Him frequently to exercise was the Divine

power to transform the character of a sinner and to lift a worldly soul to the plane of superconsciousness by a single touch. He would take the sins of others upon His own shoulders and would purify them by transmitting His own spirituality and by opening the spiritual eyes of His true followers.

The days of prophecy have passed before our eyes. The manifestation of the Divine powers of One who is worshipped today by thousands as the latest Incarnation of Divinity, we have witnessed with our eyes. Blessed are they who have seen Him and touched His holy feet. May the glory of Sri Ramakrishna be felt by all nations of the earth; may His Divine powers be manifested in the earnest and sincere souls of His devotees of all countries in all ages to come—this is the constant prayer of this spiritual child and humble servant of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna.

निरञ्जनं नित्यमनन्तरूपं,
भक्तानुकम्पाधृतविग्रहं वै ।
ईशावतारं परमेशमीड्यं,
तं रामकृष्णं शिरसा नमामः । ।

ॐ शान्तिः । ॐ शान्तिः । । ॐ शान्तिः ।

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